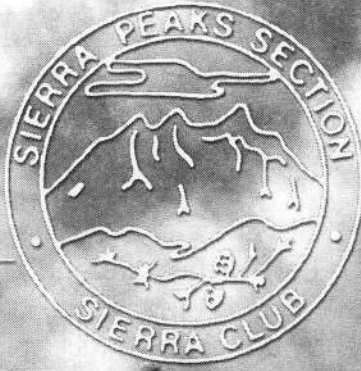


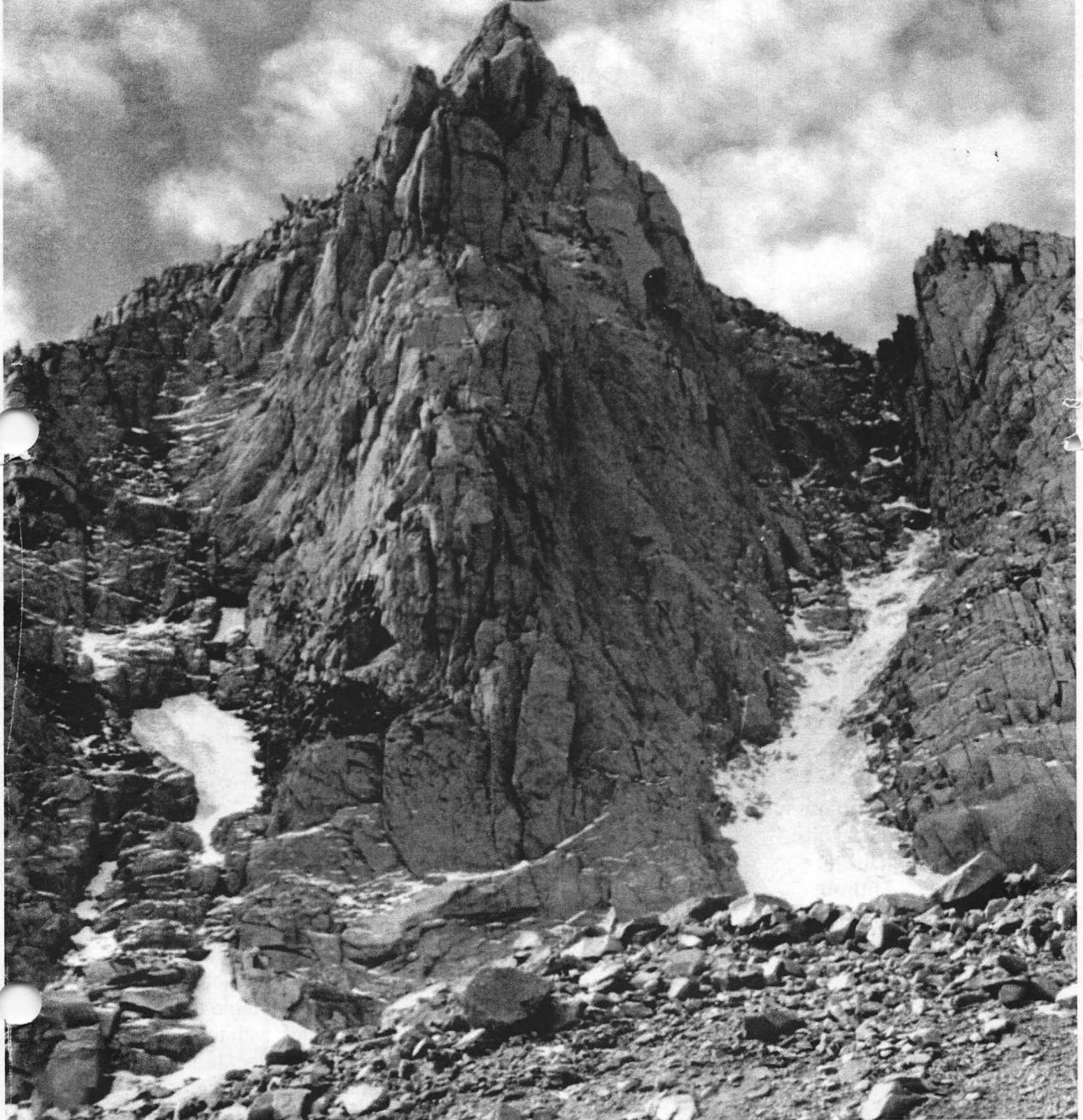
# The Sierra

VOLUME 45 NUMBER 4



# ECHO

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2001



## SPS MONTHLY PROGRAMS

SPS meetings are held in the Los Angeles room behind the cafeteria at the DWP, 7:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month. Department of Water & Power, 111 North Hope Street, Los Angeles. Free parking (please inform parking attendants that you are attending a Sierra Club meeting).

### October 10 - Wednesday - Reiner Stenzel, speaker

Reiner Stenzel will talk about the ups and downs of ski mountaineering. See (adjacent photo & story page 10) Tinemaha ski trip photo from Reiner's April trip.

**November 14 - Wednesday - Greg Roach, speaker** will show slides and talk about some of his favorite Sierra trips.

**December 12 - Wednesday - Denali climbers Nile Sorenson, Matthew Richardson, Maria Roa and Joe White,** A meeting to congratulate the successful SPS members on their climb of Denali. Come and see slides from the June 2001 trip. (See story page 13)

**January 9 - Wednesday - ANNUAL SPS AWARDS BANQUET.** Travel to Kilimanjaro (Uhuru Peak) with speaker and video production director Dave Sholle. (Supporting cast/ fellow climbers include Barb Sholle, Tim & Tom Bowman and Jack Miller). Join your climbing friends at the SPS banquet. Location - Long Beach, CA. Tickets \$25.00. Upcoming story and details Oct/Nov issue of *The Echo*. Send check (SPS) and SASE to Barbee Tidball, 3826 Weston Pl., Long Beach, CA 90807.

### Peak List

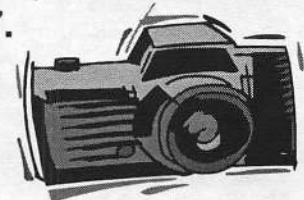
Tinemaha  
 Red & White  
 Birch  
 Thumb  
 Red Slate  
 Palisades  
 Mt. Pickering  
 Joe Devel  
**Travel Reports**  
 Denali  
 High Places - Yap

### Front Cover

? Mystery Peak ?

Photo by ?Mystery - call , write

or e-mail Echo Editors with your ideas !!

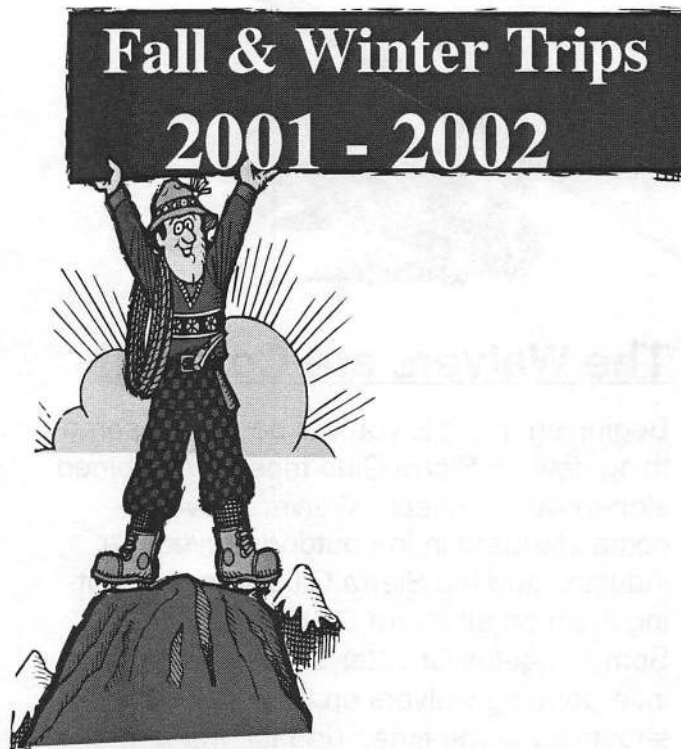


### Editor's Note:

Yes for those of you who noticed, the Echo is late. Actually we decided to take advantage of the editors' vacation and delay publication by one month. This will enable us to move the publication schedule to coincide with the January Banquet. Next Echo will be Oct/Nov then Dec/Jan and so on. All other dates and SPS events remain the same.



Skiers ascending south slopes of Mt Tinemaha  
 4/29/01




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## SEPTEMBER

**M: Sept 15-16 Sat-Sun, Split Mt. (14,042):** Split Mtn. (originally known as "South Palisade") provides an excellent climb of one of California's "fouteeners" for those who are comfortable with 3rd class rock and can breathe the thin air. Send 2 SASE, e-mail, detailed climbing resume w/ rock exper. to Prov. Ldr: Jason Lynch. Asst: Barbara Cohen

**I: Sept 15 Sat, Lamont Pk (7429):** Intro trip w/ car camp. Send sase after Aug 1 to Ldrs: Jerry & Nancy Keating

**I: Sept 15-16 Sat-Sun, University Pk (13,632):** WTC/SPS. Send \$5 permit fee, 2 sase. Prov. Ldr: Patty Rambert. Asst: R J Secor

**M: Sept 15-16 Sat-Sun, Giraud Peak (12,608'), Mt Goode (13,085')** Send sase or email, \$5 permit fee Ldr Ret Moore, Co-Ldr Steve Eckert

**I: Sept 15-16 Sat-Sun, Mt Pinchot (13,494'), Mt Wynne (13,179):** Ldr: Dave Endres. Asst: Barry Holchin

**I: Sept 16-18 Sun-Tue, Mt. Gilbert (13,106):** SPS intro. trip. Send 2 sase, \$5 permit fee Ldr: Patty Kline. Asst: Sue Holloway

**I: Sept 22-23 Sat-Sun, Mt. Silliman (11,188):** WTC students and newcomers welcome Ldr: Tina Bowman. Co-Ldr: Doug Mantle.

See past editions of *The Sierra Echo* for detailed write-ups of trips without full write-ups. Trips previously described are listed without detailed write-ups in subsequent publications. Note all trips listed as MR or ER are restricted trips open to Sierra Club members only with the appropriate rock or snow skills. For all trips remember to send a SASE, Sierra Club #, experience and conditioning resume (if you are not known to the leaders), H & W phone #s, e-mail address optional, and rideshare information.

**M: Sept 22-23 Sat-Sun, Dunderberg Peak (12,374'), Excelsior Mtn (12,446):** WTC/SPS Send 2 sase Ldr: Beth Epstein. Asst: Kim Gimenez.

**MR: Sept 22-24 Sat-Mon, Mt Lyell (13,114') & Mt Maclure (12,960):** Send 2 sase Prov. Ldr: Maria Roa. Asst. R.J. Secor

**M: Sept 29-30 Sat-Sun, Mt. Baldwin (12,615') & Mt. Morrison (12,277):** Ldr: Scot Jamison. Co-Ldr: Larry Tidball

**I/M/E: Sept. 30 Sun Grinnell Ridge Navigation** Nav noodles basic (I/M) or advanced (E) level nav req. To receive homework send nav. exper./training, etc. and sase to Harry Freimanis, Asst. Bob Bradshaw.

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## OCTOBER

**ER: Oct 5-7 Fri-Sun (or Oct 6-8 Sat-Mon) Mt Francis Farquhar (12,893'), The Sphinx (9,143):** Limited to experienced club members. Send 2 SASE Ldr: Larry Tidball. Co-Lead: Bill Oliver.

**I: Oct 6-7 Sat-Sun, Three Sisters (10,612):** Send 2 sase or email, H&W phones, resume of exper. Ldr: Beth Epstein. Asst: Kim Gimenez.

**I/M: Oct 21 Sun Sheep Pass Joshua Tree Navigation** Nav noodles to satisfy basic (I/M) level nav req. To receive homework send nav. exper./training, etc. and sase to Harry Freimanis, Asst. Bob Bradshaw.

**C: Oct 26-28 Fri - Sun Wilderness First Aid Course.** Location- Harwood Lodge. Fee \$140/\$150. Prerequisite current CPR certificate. Ldr.: Steve Schuster. Contact WFAC, P.O. Box 3414, Fullerton, CA 92834

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## NOVEMBER

**O: Nov 2 Chapter Fund Raiser w/ Orange County Group & OCSS - Fullerton Art Gallery.** Music, munchies and shopping. \$10 donation to bebefit Angeles Chptr. & Coyote Hills & Santa Ana Mtns. Task Forces. 6-9 PM See Schedule 288.

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## NOVEMBER *continued*

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**O: Nov 2-4 Chapter Fund Raiser 90th Birthday Bash.** Location - San Francisco See Schedule 288.

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**I/M: Nov 10 - 11 Sat - Sun Indian Cove Navigation** Sat practice. Sun. checkout. Nav noodles to satisfy basic (I/M) level nav req. To receive homework assignment send nav. exper./training, etc. and sase to Ldr. Harry Freimanis, Asst. Bob Bradshaw.

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**C: Nov 10 Sat CPR & Basic 1st Aid Class.** This free class is made possible by a grant from the Friends of the Angeles Chapter Foundation. The class is open to LTC graduates and outings leaders who wish to refresh 1st aid skills. Includes AHA CPR card. Sign up immediately, class size is limited. Deposit (\$50.00 to be returned upon class attendance) Send SASE w/ check made out to FACF to organizer: Ann Kramer.

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**C: Nov 15-18 Thur - Sun Wilderness Advanced First Aid Course.** Location O'Neil Regional Park, Orange County. 36 hour course, \$295 plus \$15 textbook. Approved for O - E Ldrs. requirements. Contact Adventure 16 (Deanna) 619/283-2362 ext.156

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**O: Nov 17 Sat Beginning Navigation Clinic:** Mt. Lowe (5603') area: 4 mi, 500' gain Spend Day with an expert (1-3 students per instructor) learning or sharpening your skills with a map and compass. Beginners to old timers welcome. Not a checkoff. Many expert instructors will attend. Send sase for required materials early to:Ldr. Diane Dunbar, Co-Ldr. Don Creighton.

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## DECEMBER

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**O: Dec 1 Sat Chapter Fund Raiser Southwest Museum Tour.** \$12.00 adults, \$8.00 Children. Ldr.: Ruth Dobos, Co-ldr. Frank Dobos See Schedule 288.

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**O: Dec 1-2 Sat-Sun Chapter Fund Raiser Santa Barbara Weekend Beach Hike.** Train to Carpenteria, hike 12.8 mi to Santa Barbara. Overnight Pepper Tree Inn \$163.00 Ldr.: Roxana Lewis, See Schedule 288.

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**O: Dec 8 Sat Chapter Fund Raiser LA Metro Rail Tour.** Discover LA's fabulous underground Metro Rail system. Breakfast in Mexico, to dinner in Tokyo! \$10.00 donation plus rail fare. Ldr.: Rudi Beuermann, Co-ldr. Frank Dobos See Schedule 288.

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**I/M/E: Dec 9 Sun Warren Pt Navigation** Navigation noodle at J Tree for checkout or practice. To receive homework assignment send nav. exper./training, etc. and sase w/ e-mail address to Ldr. Harry Freimanis, Asst. Bob Bradshaw.

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## The Waivers are Coming!

Beginning this fall, you will be seeing something new on Sierra Club trips - a combined sign-in/waiver sheet. Waivers have become standard in the outdoor adventure industry, and the Sierra Club is implementing them on all Sierra Club trips.

Some Angeles Chapter entities have been incorporating waivers on their sign-in sheets for some time. (In fact, the format of the new national sign in/waiver sheets was developed from these Angeles Chapter models.) Participants on trips sponsored by the Hundred Peaks, Desert Peaks, Sierra Peaks and some other entities won't notice much of a variation in their pre-hike routine. The only difference will be in the text of the new standardized waiver. Most Angeles Chapter entities have been using plain sign-in sheets, as required by the Angeles Chapter Safety Policy. The new waiver language has been incorporated on a standard sign-in sheet, which all participants will be required to sign. The waiver is an important legal document, and everyone should read it before signing it. (The text of the waiver is reproduced here for easy reference.)

A few Angeles Chapter entities have been exempt from the sign-in sheet requirement for certain regularly repeated conditioning hikes. At this time, it appears that the sign-in sheet/waiver requirement will apply to these conditioning hikes, too. Participants on these conditioning hikes, please be patient with us as we work out these new procedures! *Report by Ann Kramer*

## ECHOES FROM THE CHAIR

August 27, 2001

It is that time of year when Highway 395 is a near weekly experience. Lots to report at midseason!

In light of the migration of DPS and HPS to the LA Zoo's Grande Room, SPS management has considered and declined to move the monthly meetings. All felt that our attendance in Griffith Park would suffer due to the commuting burden on our South Bay, Long Beach and Orange County members. So we will retain our centrally-located (mutually inconvenient to all?) DWP home for now. Do take advantage of the nearby early and late evening happy hour venues, another nice Downtown advantage. If there is interest, we'll restart the regular pre-meeting Climbers' Social Hours.

Kudos goes to our SPS compadres (Maria, Matthew, Nile & Joe) that topped Denali on June 17<sup>th</sup>. They will present their fresh slideshow program at the December meeting.

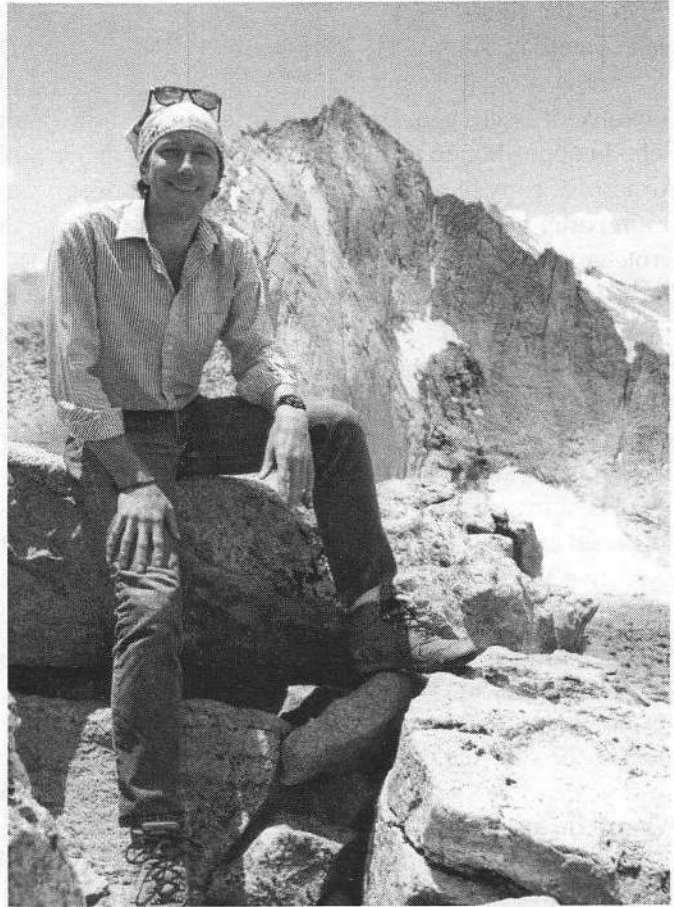
Mark your calendars now for the Jan 9<sup>th</sup> SPS banquet in Long Beach. Let's all skip the rain dance this time. We're very pleased to have Dave Sholle's fine program on climbing and exploring Mt Kilimanjaro, the highpoint of Africa.

The next annual joint peaks section gathering, hosted by the SPS, follows on Feb 13<sup>th</sup> at the DWP. For the first time, the Lower Peaks Committee (LPC) will join us. This fun mixer will feature refreshments, and is highlighted by the presentation on Doug Mantle's successful climb of Himalayas' lofty and difficult Ama Dablam (22,494'). There is a Climbers' Social Hour at McCormick & Schmicks before the meeting.

You may note that the bimonthly Echo publication date has slipped a month. This was done in light of our now regular January banquet date; it makes sense to synch up the newsletter with the prior December membership meeting to mitigate mailing.

Finally, as you read this, it should be a done deal. The announcement missed The Echo, but my finish fete Sep 8<sup>th</sup> atop Clouds Rest called for some kickass partying to wrap The List.

Cheers, Erik Siering/SPS Chair 2001



## We Get Letters

Letter of the Editor

Date: Saturday, August 11, 2001

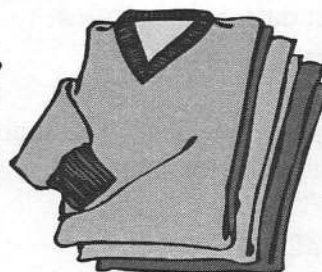
A couple of issues ago, I wrote an article to the SPS Echo in opposition to expansion of the Mammoth Airport. A copy of my SPS article was handed over to a reporter at small-town local newspaper who wrote an op ed piece comparing my reporting and Barbee Tidball's editing to the Star and National Enquirer. I took the criticism as a compliment. My first job out of college in 1978 was at the NBC affiliate of KCRA in Sacramento, and eventually I spent most of my career at NBC, then FOX. One thing we knew at the networks, was that some of the best investigative reporting in the business happened at the Star and Enquirer. The Senior Executive Vice President of my department required that I have a mandatory subscription to both the Star and Enquirer at NBC and FOX. If there was dirt to be dug, the Star and Enquirer would find it first. And despite the protestation of most of their subjects, most of the stuff they report is true.

What is disturbing is that someone in the Sierra Peaks Section purposefully handed over a copy of the article to damage another member's credibility. It's a sad day for the Sierra Club when petty politics become more important than the real environmental issues.

I am still opposed to the expansion of the Mammoth Airport and its future impacts on the Owens Valley and the Sierra Nevada.

Wynne Benti

**Own Your Own SPS T-Shirt. They come with a picture of North Palisade on the front and the entire SPS list by geographic area, with Mountaineer and Emblem Peak easily identified on the back. T-Shirts come in Medium, Large and Extra Large. Colors are sand, ash and yellow. Cost is \$12.00 plus \$3.50 shipping for 1 and \$4.00 for 2 or more T-shirts. Buy them from Patty at the SPS meetings and save the shipping charge. Make check payable to the SPS. Send your order to: Patty Kline, 20362**



Date: July 7, 2001

David Campbell wrote that he is retiring from SPS climbing! And he went on in his letter to list climbing gear that members maybe interested in obtaining. Following is a list of climbing gear available. Please contact David at 805/522-2354 or dcamp1111@aol.com if you are interested.

Rock Climbing - Biners, Desc. Rings, Hex Nuts & Stoppers, Helmets, Harness, Belay Plates

Snow & Ice Climbing - Ice axes, Crampons, Snow Shoes, Down Mittens

Expedition Equipment - Koflach Boots, Lowa Double Boots, Overboots, Jumar Ascenders, Ice Screws

Backpacking - Thermarests, Polarguard Sleeping Bag, Gregory Pack, Caribou Pack, Lt wt 1 person tent, REI Rain pants (Gortex), PNS Boots (Gortex)  
XC Ski - Skis (Fisher, Trak), XC Ski Boots (PMS)

### ADOPT A CRAG

Saturday September 22 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM

The Friends of Joshua Tree & The Access Fund

**Here is an opportunity to show your support for our Local Crag and the most pristine Climbing area in the country: Joshua Tree National Park**

To register for this event CALL or send check to FOJT, P.O. Box 739 Joshua Tree, CA 92252

Meet 7:30AM at Nomad Ventures parking lot. (Hwy 62/ Park Blvd.)

Call: 760/366-9699 for reservations and info.

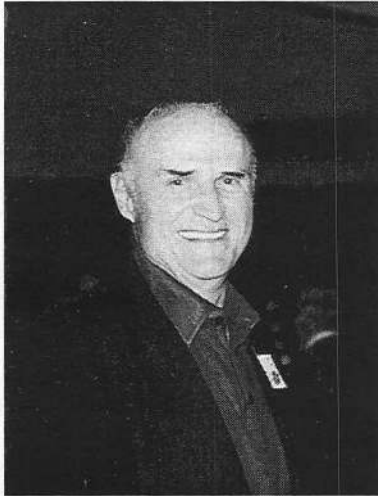
\$25.00 donation: All Trail Restoration activities/Park Entrance/ Lunch/ One year supporter of Friends of Joshua Tree/ One year FOJT Newsletter/ Camping

\$10.00 donation: All Trail restoration activities/CAM Supporter (Climbers Alert Monitoring List/ BOOTY Auction/

Slide Show/ Park Entrance/ Tools & Equipment

The above activities is not sponsored nor administered by the Sierra Club. The Sierra Club has no information about the planning of these activities and makes no representations or warranties about the quality, safety, supervision or management of such activities. They are published only as a reader service because they may be of interest to readers of the publication.

### SPS T-SHIRTS



Andy Smatko Dec. 1995  
List Finisher #1

## SPS MEMBER RECEIVES FRANCIS P. FARQUHAR AWARD - SIERRA CLUB 2001

Nominating Letter submitted to Awards Committee by Duane  
McRuer and Doug Mantle:

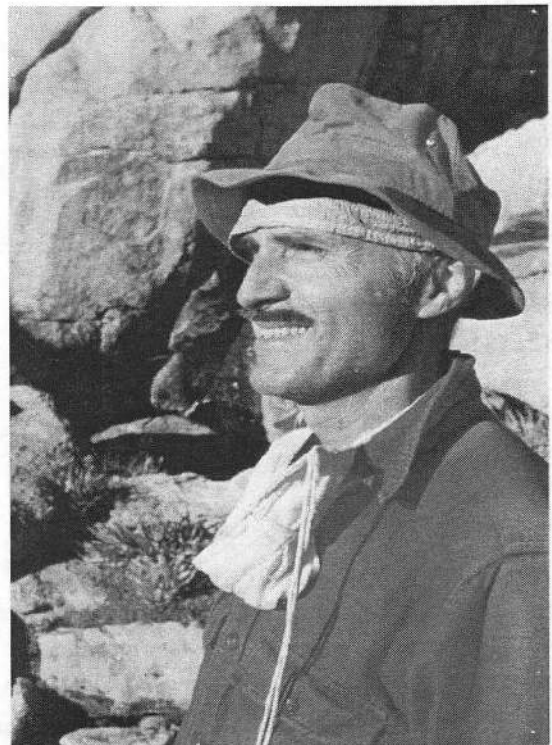
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June 1, 2001

On the Sierra Club Website the Francis P. Farquhar Mountaineering Award is described as follows:  
"Honors an individual's contribution to mountaineering and enhancement of the Club's prestige in this field. The Mountaineering Committee selects recipients."

The last recipients of the Farquhar Award were Randall Danta and Douglas Mantle, in 1994. Since then the Award has been dormant, primarily because an organizational entity to replace the Mountaineering Committee has been absent. Since the renaissance of mountaineering activities in the Club has now become well advanced, operating under the immediate oversight of the Mountaineering Oversight Committee, it is again appropriate to consider candidates for the Award. As the present day version of the Mountaineering Committee, the Mountaineering Oversight Committee (MOC) has established a Farquhar Award Subcommittee, co-chaired by Douglas Mantle (a previous Farquhar awardee) and Duane McRuer (a former MOC chair and a Farquhar Awards Chair for the previous Mountaineering Committee). This subcommittee has recommended that the next Farquhar Award be presented to:  
Andrew Smatko, M.D., "Indomitable Explorer and Chronicler of the Sierra Nevada."

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**What Accomplishments qualify the nominee for the award?**

**Dr. Andrew J. Smatko is the Dean of Sierra Climbers and the modern day version of whole groups of past Sierra Explorers. The sheer numbers are daunting. In over 40 years Smatko has made over 1,800 Sierra ascents, eclipsing even the legendary Norman Clyde. While the earlier Clyde had his pick of first ascents, Smatko had to search diligently and systematically for them. He met the challenge, making over 300 first ascents, by far a record. Clyde can be likened to a sharpshooter, picking off notable first ascents and relentlessly repeating them, while Smatko can be characterized**



as a carpet bomber. He left no Sierra peak above 11,000 feet elevation unscaled, accounting for well over half his climbs. More than a few climbers have since lamented that he left almost no unclimbed peaks for them. His energy and commitment were likewise phenomenal: he topped 102 summits in 1975, his best season, but also had 70, 80 and even 90 peak years as well beginning in 1953.

In his climbs he crisscrossed hundreds of passes and cols, many for the first time (although the number of actual "first" crossings is impossible to determine). In this respect he is in the very first rank of Sierra Nevada explorers.

Smatko did not confine himself only to the planning, exploring, and climbing accomplishments – he was a foremost chronicler as well. When a new edition and version of the Sierra Club classic, "A Climber's Guide to the High Sierra," published in 1954, was needed, the Club turned to Andy to further its Totebook series with a revised guide. Editing and expanding earlier works, Smatko prepared the "Mountaineer's Guide to the High Sierra," published by the Club in 1972. By taking his own systematic explorations into account, this work included descriptions of many previously overlooked peaks and passes.

His exploits were not limited to the Sierra. He was the first to explore many of the desert ranges of California, adding more "Firsts" to his totals. He also played a major role in Sierra Club climbing activities, being the very first "triple list finisher" in the Angeles Chapter. This refers to the combination of his #1 finish of the 247 peaks of the Sierra Peaks Section and the 98 peaks of the Desert Peaks Section, and his #11 completion of the over 270 peaks of the Hundred Peaks Section.

Dr. Smatko managed all this and more while raising a family and maintaining a successful medical practice. He continues that practice today, and an occasional climb as well, at age 83!

We hope that this information is sufficient to support the recommendation by the Mountaineering Oversight Committee of this outstanding mountaineer as the first recipient in the New Millennium of the Farquhar Award.

#### Duane McRuer and Douglas Mantle

#### Francis P. Farquhar Award - past awardees:

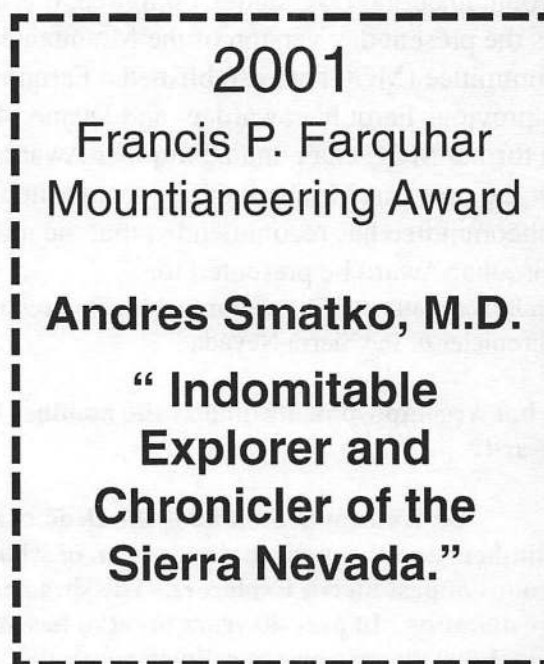
1970 Norman Clyde, Allen Steck  
 1971 Richard Leonard  
 1972 Jules Eichorn  
 1973 Glen Dawson  
 1974 Nick Clinch, Marjorie Farquhar  
 1977 Galen Rowell  
 1979 William E. Siri  
 1981 Sam Fink  
 1982 Arlene Blum  
 1983 Steve Roper  
 1985 Richard Hechtel  
 1987 Lotte Kramer  
 1988 Gordon Benner  
 1994 Randall Danta, Douglas Mantle  
 2001 Andrew Smatko

#### Andy Smatko SPS Accomplishments

October 25, 1964 1st SPS List Finisher - Mt. Muah

1965 Section secretary

1966 Volume 10, No. 2 *The Sierra Echo*, article "Comments On Peak Classification" (for copies contact Barbee Tidball @ lbtidball@earthlink.net or mail a SASE)





A Biographical Note, taken from "Classics in the Literature of Mountaineering and Mountain Travel" from the Francis P. Farquhar Collection of Mountaineering Literature, an annotated bibliography compiled and edited by James R. Cox, University of California Library, Los Angeles, 1980. [This collection resides at UCLA.]

### **Francis P. Farquhar, 1887 - 1974**

Born in Newton, Massachusetts, on December 31, 1887, he was raised in the New England of the White Mountains, the range which he knew and loved as a youth. He earned his bachelor's degree at Harvard University (1909), and fifty-eight years later, 1967, he was awarded the honorary degree Doctor of Humane Letters by UCLA for his contributions to Western history and conservation.

Moving to the West in 1911, he became a highly successful certified public accountant, practicing in San Francisco from 1911 to 1959 and in Boston from 1912 to 1914. He was a member of the California State Board of Accounting during the 1950s and its President from 1953 to 1954, and he was a member of the California Society of Certified Public Accountants.

He had early determined to devote equal attention to his other interests – mountaineering, conservation, history, bibliography, geography, and other scholarly endeavors. He was president of the California Historical Society from 1960 to 1962, and president of the California Academy of Sciences from 1950 to 1953. One of the great bookman-scholars with a rich and distinguished list of publications numbering well over 100, he was a climber and lover of mountains, particularly his beloved Sierra Nevada, and a conservationist in the word's first meaning. He was a member of the Sierra Club for 63 years, carrying on the tradition of John Muir, Joseph Le Conte, Will Colby, and the other founding and early members of the club. He was twice its president (1933-35 and 1948-49) and was editor of the *Sierra Club Bulletin* from 1926 to 1946, during which time it achieved a reputation of the highest distinction among mountaineering publications. He was the authority on the Sierra Nevada and the Sierra Club's role in it, and was the recipient in 1965 of the Club's John Muir Award for Conservation.

A distinguished member of the American Alpine Club, the Alpine Club, and numerous other mountaineering clubs, he edited the American Alpine Journal from 1956 to 1959.

Francis P. Farquhar died in Berkeley, California, on November 20, 1974.

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Additional comments by Bill Oliver:

Francis Farquhar and Ansel Hall made the first ascent of Middle Palisade on August 26, 1923, having climbed Disappointment Peak the day prior. This peak is a 14er (14,040 feet) in the Sierra Nevada Palisades.

He is the author of the classic "History of the Sierra Nevada," 1965.

Marjory Bridge Farquhar, Francis's spouse, passed away in San Francisco on January 22, 1999 at the age of 95. She was a very accomplished Sierra climber, and she also served on the Sierra Club's Board of Directors.

## **SPS LEADERS**

**Plan Your Spring 2002 Climbing Trips!!!**

**Deadline: First week November to SPS**

**Outings Chair - Ron Hudson**

# Mt Tinemaha

April 28-29, 2001

By Rainer Stenzel

This trip was a tri-athletic adventure involving mountain biking, climbing and skiing. Our destination was a 12,520' peak in the Eastern Sierra



Reiner after mountain biking to Red Lke trailhead

Nevada near Big Pine. The access was via the infamous McMurry Mdws Rd and the Red Lke trail. We were a group of five: Ruth von Rotz von Truckee, Susan Livingston, Baharam Manahedgi, R. J. Secor and yours truly. On Sat, 4/28, 6 am, we met at the intersection of the Glacier Lodge Rd and McMurry Mdws Rd, drove up the dusty dirt road for 7 mi and then parked the passenger cars at McMurry Meadows (6,400') prior to the Birch Creek stream crossing. The idea was to mountain-bike the rough 4WD road which normal cars cannot make. However, the plan to bike 5 mi, +1,000',

with full packs and skis was not fully appreciated and the ladies brought their trucks as a backup. So the bikers, Baharam and myself, had our motorized support team. Without packs and skis the bike ride was fun, at least down to the Red Lke Ranch, then it became a workout to paddle up 1,000' on a sandy road. But by 8 am we all made it to the correct Red Lke trailhead (6,500'). Here we stashed the bikes into the cars and saddled up our packs with skis which weighed anywhere from 39 lbs (R. J.'s) to 65 lbs (sufferer's name omitted).

By 8:45 am, on a sunny spring day, we headed up the sandy northern trail high above Red Mtn Creek. It felt like a summer trip since the paint brush was already blooming and no snow around for the next 2,500'. The 5 mi, 4,000' hike up Red Lke trail involves some bush whacking, route finding and postholing. At about 9,500', we had solid snow coverage and skinned up the last 1,000' to Red Lke (10,500'). The beautiful lake is located below the steep east face of Split Mtn and offered great campsites among trees near its shore. It was frozen over but with ice axe and shovel we opened up a suitable

waterhole. Around 3 pm we pitched our two Bibler submarines, Baharam set up his bivvy, and we cooked and ate on dry rocks near the shore. It was time for relaxing and enjoying the great mountain scenery. The north facing slopes were solidly covered with snow but we were not so sure about the south facing slopes of Tinemaha which were out of sight. R. J. did some scouting and brought back good news about plenty of snow. We all admired his flawless turns down a steep hill. The mood was high by dinner time. In the evening spectacular lenticular clouds formed over the Sierra crest. Gusts of wind drove us into the tents. Baharam shared his deli-

cious herbal tea with everyone which made us sleep well.

On Sun, 4/29, we got up by 6 am to take pictures of the first sun rays on Split Mtn. Surprisingly, it was completely calm and there was not a cloud in the sky. After our sumptuous oatmeal breakfast we packed and started around 7:30 am for Tinemaha. There was no need for an alpine start because we wanted to time our ski descent to the best corn snow conditions around mid day. From Red Lke we ascended north into a 1 mi long valley which leads to the base of the peak. On the frozen snow it was faster to crampon up than to ski up. We had a few breaks to enjoy the scenery and to take pictures. At the end of the valley we climbed to the crest, left the skis in the rocks and continued the next 300' with crampons and ski poles over mixed rock and snow. Finally, the last 50' was just a rock scramble on foot to the western summit (12,520') where the peak register was hidden under a rock pile. At 10 am we signed in as the first visitors in 2001. The view was worth all the effort. Sitting 8,500' above Owens Valley on a sunny, calm spring morning was a true pleasure. Many 14,000' mountains were clearly visible: Split, Mid Pal, Sill, and Williamson. We snacked and replenished fluids, took summit pictures, and had a good time. But by 11 am it was time to leave. We retraced our steps back to the skis and then started the best part of the trip, i.e., the ski run down on now perfect spring snow, about 2" of soft snow on a firm base. It was telemarking at its best. The alpine skiers had equal fun. Turn after turn we flew down the slopes in minutes which took us an hour to climb. This is the best way to enjoy those SPS peaks which, in summer time, are boring scree/talus ascents.

By noon the last ones were back at camp. We had lunch, packed and left the beautiful Red Lke area by 1:30 pm. Skiing with full packs became a bit more strenuous. Initially the snow was still forgiving, further down it turned into deep mush. Turning became an act of strength and balance and fancy turns gave way to survival turns. Falling with heavy packs in deep wet snow is exhausting and worse, one can easily twist one's legs. We skied down on the north facing slopes (south) of Red Mtn Creek which had snow coverage much lower than the trail on the south facing slopes. However, we needed to cross the creek to regain the trail. This proved to be a painful bush whacking experience which not only R.J. but also the ladies expressed in colorful language that shall not be quoted. Finally,

we were back on track and marching down the dry trail into cactus country. Coming through a turn I almost stepped on a 3' buzz worm whose angry rattle required a temporary retreat. By 4:30 pm we were back at the cars. After the 6,000' descent there was no desire left for mountain biking. So we squeezed five people, bikes, skis and gear into the two 4WD cars and drove on the bumpy road back to McMurry Mdws. By 6 pm the last ones were on their way home. All together, we had a wonderful trip, a fun group, excellent weather, and some fine backcountry skiing. Thanks to everyone, especially co-leader R. J., for this fine weekend.

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## **RED AND WHITE**

**March 25-26, 2001**

By Reiner Stenzel

This was an improvised private ski mountaineering trip on the weekend of the scheduled but canceled Olancha Pk trip. Four of us decided to ski and climb an SPS peak in the Eastern Sierra Nevada. Red and White (12,816') is located at the end of the McGee Creek drainage south of Mammoth, north of Rock Creek. On Sun, 3/25, 6 am, Mark Vogt, Jonathan Meaghan, Susan Livingston, and myself met at the crossing of the McGee Creek Road and Hwy 395. The normally easy drive to the trailhead became a challenge due to first intermittent and finally solid snow coverage. All of our 4WD cars barely made it to the stables just short of the trailhead. From there we skinned up on the trail which parallels the creek. Except for some creek crossings we had solid snow coverage. Between Buzztail and Horsetail Springs the trail turns southward and a great panorama of snow covered peaks of the backcountry opens up. We navigated through forest, crossed frozen lakes, climbed some steep gullies, which by 3 pm got us to the McGee Lks. We camped on a plateau at 11,200' between Big and Little McGee Lks with great views on Red and White, Crocker, Hopkins, corniced Hopkins Pass, and several frozen lakes. We relaxed in the afternoon sun before it vanished in approaching high clouds. We planned our ascent route via Pk 12,360' and the cl 3 NE ridge, although the  
(continued page 26)

## Birch and Thumb

July 27-29, 2001

By Ret Moore

This scheduled SPS trip had a complement of 8 people, but dwindled to only 4 at kickoff. They consisted of Randy Danta, Virgil Talbott, Gary Bowen and myself. We met Friday morning at 6:30 on the 2 wheel drive road to McMurry Meadows just before you cross Birch Creek. I wasn't sure of how you get to the Birch Lake trailhead but thanks to Virgil we had no trouble finding it. A rough road turns off to the NW about a quarter mile before you reach Birch Creek. This takes you up to the northern part of the meadows and pretty much requires a 4 wheel drive vehicle to get all the way to the trail head signs, but you can almost reach the trail head with a high clearance 2 wheel drive vehicle. By the time we got all of the vehicles there and unloaded our gear it was almost 7:30. The trail is pretty straight forward from here, although we missed it where it left the meadow and had to cut back across country and pick it up as it goes up a small canyon north of Birch. The trail never gets near the creek until you arrive at the lake. Below about 10,000 feet elevation, the only water along the trail is a very small spring.

Randy had some hopes that we could climb Birch that afternoon, but we didn't get up to the lake until about 2 PM and the rest of us were pretty well spent and we decided to stick to the original plan and do Birch and Thumb the on Saturday. The happy hour scheduled for Friday evening would not have been very happy if we would have tried Birch. The next day we were up by 5 and away by 6 AM. We picked a chute about half way up the lake to ascend, but as got up a ways it turn out that we were a little premature so we crossed over to the next chute to the south which went all the way to the plateau, a few hundred yards north-east of the summit. After relaxing a while on the peak, we started down the ridge toward the Tinemaha-Birch saddle to descend a large chute that ends in the draw just southeast of the glacier above Birch Lake.

Then after a short break for lunch about 2 PM, we crossed the glacier (happy that we had brought

our ice axes along), climbed the short rock slope and started up the long moderate slope to the summit. Randy went ahead followed by Gary, Virgil and our lagging leader. After a considerable wait on the top I arrived to sign the register and we all started down. When we reached the level of the glacier we shortcut down the rocks above the lake and the back to camp about 13 hours after we left that morning, all three of we older climbers well spend.

Our original plans were to climb Bolton Brown and Prater on Sunday, but based on our performance on the two easier peaks on Saturday the three of us felt we could not do both peaks the next day. This lead to some hard decisions. If we were to climb only Bolton Brown it probably would not be wise for Randy to wait for us nor us to wait for his return to BB so that we could all go back together. This meant that he would be climbing alone all day and we with only one leader, not the best plan for a scheduled SPS trip. To climb only BB was not very appealing to anyone, because it meant that we would have to come back some way later to climb Prater and if that were done it would be much easier to do BB at the same time. In the end we decided to go out on Sunday. We slept in the next day, hiked out, washed up in Big Pine Creek and had lunch at the Pizza Factory in Lone Pine.



Stuck in a tent for 3 days at 19,300 ft. on Cerro Aconcagua in 1999, Matt Richardson and I started talking about climbing Mt. McKinley (hereafter in this write-up referred to with great respect as Denali or "the Great One"). After several years of planning our thoughts and plans materialized. The addition of Maria Roa and Joe White made our team complete.

# Denali

BY NILE SORENSON

The summer of 2001 was a banner year for climbers attempting Denali. It happened to be one of the best weather years in recent history. Our team reaped the benefits of the good fortune. National Park Service (NPS) statistics record that 1305 climbers attempted the climb with a 65% success rate. This was nearly a record. Success rates usually average between 30 to 45%. Another record was equaled this year in that there had been no fatalities for 3 years in a row. However, these numbers do not reflect the casualties due to frostbite, falls, or altitude related injuries.

Most arrangements for services or shuttles we made over the internet. We also referred to guide books by RJ Secor and Colby Coombs for the West Buttress route. These books can give details of much of the climb or needed gear.

Our team took a redeye flight to Anchorage where we met our prearranged shuttle, Denali Overland Transport. They were willing to pick us up at the airport at 2:30 am. Riding with us were two Russian climbers who were at the airport when we arrived. Sitting in the front of the van was a climber with frost bitten fingertips. He had been at the hospital in Anchorage for treatment and was now returning to Talkeetna to join the other members of his group when they came down the mountain.

Photo Adjacent page:  
Nile Sorenson on ridge at 17,000'

Needless to say, meeting a climbing casualty face to face at the airport was a rather sobering way to start the trip—our first surprise.

Just short of 3 hours later we arrived in Talkeetna. From this quaint little town, climbers assemble to fly in small single engine planes equipped with skis and land on a finger of the

Kahiltna Glacier 15 miles below the summit of Denali. Of course pilots only fly if the weather on the mountain is good, so often times climbers are stranded for days in Talkeetna. We had arranged to fly up to the mountain with Doug Geeting Aviation. It

was our impression that Geeting's service had a bunkhouse of sorts near the airport where we could get some sleep or even stay if the weather was bad. This was incorrect. Doug Geeting has no bunkhouse—our second surprise. There were several sleeping climbers crammed into the small-carpeted space in his business office. This was the "bunkhouse". Several of the other flight services have a decent bunkhouse that accommodates waiting climbers due to bad weather. The K-2 facility looked impressive.

After sleeping a couple of hours in the van, we opened the Roadhouse restaurant at 6:30 am for a great breakfast. The NPS ranger station is just down the road and opened at 8:00 am. We greeted the ranger as she put the key in the door. In order to obtain a climbing permit, one must register and place a deposit 3 months in advance with the NPS. Our expedition name was "CSF". Climbing Safely with Friends. Besides, CSF was easy to write on all the wands that we would use up on the mountain to mark routes and caches. Each climber must complete the registration process in person at the ranger station. They collect the balance of the permit fees and actually look at pictures on your ID to verify you are who you claim to be. You then are treated to a 2-hour slide presentation on climbing the mountain. Our particular ranger named Karen was not just an office person. She had spent substantial amounts of time on Denali and had summited several times. This was a much different experience than interfacing with the park service people we typically deal with in Lone Pine or

Bishop, who for the most part are office staff or just casual hikers and are not climbers. Karen reviewed current route conditions, gave very specific instructions on human waste disposal and queried us on our gear. This seminar was informative and helpful.

We obtained permit #251 and started the walk to the airport. We finalized the finances with Geeting's air service and sorted gear to go up to the mountain. Shortly, all 4 of us and all our gear were flying with Doug Geeting himself. The flight is spectacular, including the glacier landing at the 7,200 ft. base camp. We checked in with the base camp manager, Lisa, just after noon and obtained our 6 gallons of white gas. This was way too much gas for the 4 of us. We ended up leaving a gallon at base camp and later tried to give away several liters up at 14 camp. We casually set up camp and started organizing gear.

Day 2. We spent this day acclimatizing and doing some rope work with crevasse rescue practice on the big crevasses just north of the base camp. We also hooked up our sleds and practiced towing some gear. This is a must. It is surprising how unruly the sled can be with 50-70 lbs. of gear loaded, particularly going downhill or traversing.

Day 3. The plan was to get up during the night and travel in colder temperatures to 7,600 ft. or more commonly called 8,000 or 8 camp. Climbing up a glacier with hidden crevasses is safer when it is colder and the snow is more solid. We awoke to a snowstorm and were a little concerned about traveling in a light snowstorm and whiteout so we slept in. Finally Maria and I were so antsy that we convinced everyone to get going. We started down the glacier on heartbreak hill. You must lose 500ft. of elevation in 1 mile from base camp before you get down on the Kahiltna Glacier to move up the mountain. Joe was the trailer on the rope and consequently had the hardest job with managing the sled since it was not connected to the climbing rope. The weather cleared in a couple of hours to spectacular views. We moved into 8 camp at about 3:15 pm, set up tents and started the everyday task of melting snow for hours to get enough water.

Day 4. We were up at 4:30 am and soon moved up "Ski Hill". About halfway up I tossed the biodegradable poop bag into a huge crevasse. This made me feel a little uneasy about disposing of our

waste in this way, but that was the instruction we were given. The day was spent moving to 10,000 ft. We had hoped to move clear to 11 camp, but it was too much and our heavy loads were taking a toll. We made camp at about 10,000 ft. just below Kahiltna pass amid snow flurries. Our team was doing well—just a few headaches, but hot chocolate and good food at dinner has a way of eliminating those. This had been a hard day and we were exhausted. Joe's hips were raw where the pack belt was rubbing due to heavy loads and constant tugging of the sled.

Day 5 started out cold but warmed up nicely. We moved quickly up to 11,000 ft. where there is a large camp with lots of climbers and tents. Eleven camp sits in a rather large bowl below "motorcycle hill" and then "squirrel hill". We pulled in after 2 hours and set up in a nicely established area that had just been vacated by another team. This would be a comfortable place. It had large walls of snow blocks enclosing our tents. Our plan was to stay at 11 camp for 2 days to acclimatize. I was feeling great and talked Matt into carrying some food up higher to cache. We started up the 2 previously mentioned hills. These are rather formidable climbs bringing you to about 12,300 ft in just a short distance. The day was gorgeous and the view spectacular. We buried some food as deep as we could to keep it away from the ravens, marked it well with wands, and headed back to 11 camp. Within just a few hours, a storm came in and dumped a bunch of snow on us. Below 14,000 ft., it was typical on the mountain to experience sudden white outs and snowstorms.

Day 6. Today we loaded 15 days worth of food per person and several containers of fuel in our packs and moved up the mountain to cache the load. I had to break trail in the new snow but all went well. We made motorcycle hill, then squirrel hill and started a traverse to "windy corner". The slopes above us on the traverse were potential avalanche areas, and we cautiously went by. Most of the chutes were rather shallow and small not permitting much mass accumulation. However, in order to avoid a large crevasse field we needed to stay fairly close to the base of the ridge putting us precariously close to the run-out zone.

At windy corner, the wind was indeed blowing. We rounded the corner to find many crevasses with some bridges. We moved up to

about 13,300ft. where we dug a deep cache and marked it well. It started to snow rather hard and we hustled to get back to camp again somewhat concerned about avalanches along the traverse. By the time we reached the top of squirrel hill, it was a total white out and snowing. I was quite surprised to find a lot of climbers moving up the mountain in these conditions. With the new snow, the chutes near windy corner had to be dangerous, but maybe they all knew something we didn't or they were just stupid. We made it down the hillside and back to camp. It snowed for about 8 hours with 4 to 6 inches accumulating. Four NPS rangers had moved into camp next to us sharing one of our snow walls. We struck up a friendship with one of them named Kevin that would last for the next week and a half.

Later that evening after dinner, we found out from Kevin that two teams had been caught in an avalanche near windy corner. There were no fatalities, as they were able to dig themselves out. As we had expected, the slopes did slide, but not with enough mass to bury the groups or sweep them into the crevasse field.

Day 7. Our original plan was to move our camp today to 14,000 ft., but after the previous days snowfall we were leery about moving past the traverse with the new snow. We slept in. We shouldn't have. Lots of people were moving up and down the mountain. The day started out to be rather nice, then turned cold. We decided to go ahead and pack up and move. We started at 2 pm. hauling our sleds and all our gear up the hills. We moved past our cache at 13,300ft. and headed into 14 camp located at 14,200ft. It was very cold and blustery. We set up quickly, heated some water, had dinner and went to bed. This was another hard day but we were now at 14 camp and for the most part on

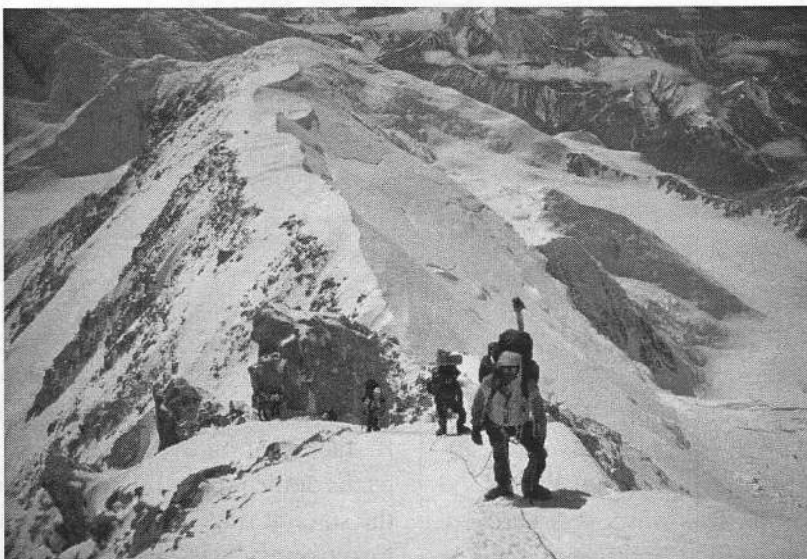
schedule.

Day 8. Our plan today was to go back to 13,300ft. and pick up our cache, which we did. Matt's thermometer read 16 degrees below zero, Fahrenheit. It was cold. After picking up the cache, we now had all our gear and food situated at 14 camp.

Day 9. We loaded packs with food and fuel intending to carry a load to the top of the headwall at 16,200ft. The winds were very bad, but we made the climb and buried the cache. The top of the head wall consists of 800 feet of fixed lines. These were straightforward but quite icy and in some places as

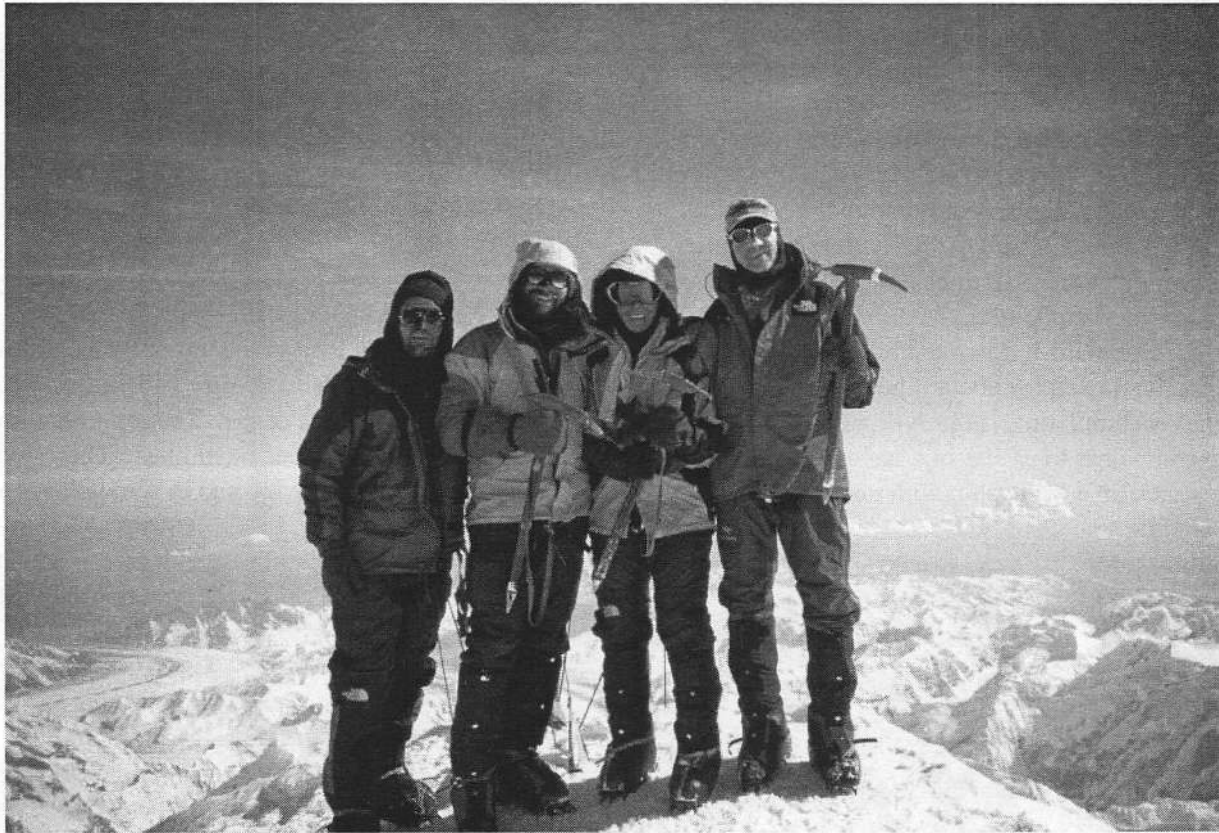
steep as 55 degrees—a pretty good grunt with a full pack at 16,000 ft. Upon returning to camp, the weather forecast posted at the NPS tents called for a big storm coming in. Everyone set to work fortifying walls and tents.

Days 10 to 14. The storm stayed out in the Bering Sea. We could see the



Ridge at 16,500 ft. Matt, Maria and Joe

thunderheads out there. There was a little snowfall almost everyday with strong winds up high on the mountain much of the time. Many climbers returned from 17 camp without summiting and many of them looked pretty battered up from the sustained cold and winds. This threatening storm would stymie us for the next 4 days. We had hoped to move up to 17,200ft. or 17 camp, but the bad forecasts and constant threat of the storm kept us locked in at 14 camp. We had now spent a **WEEK** at 14 camp and were down to one more day of food and fuel. This was a drag, but turned out to be a blessing in that all of us were extremely well acclimatized. Nearly every day some of our team climbed up to 16,000 ft. and one day close to 17,000 ft. Each of us paid attention to what his or her own body could handle. These climb high—sleep low



scenarios made our team very strong.

Day 14. Finally we moved our camp. We packed everything and started up the headwall. We passed our cache at 16,200 ft picking up 3 or 4 days of food and continued to 17 camp. This was a very hard move bringing all the gear, food, and fuel up the headwall and the ridge crest on up to 17,200ft. We camped in a broken down walled area that we would need to improve the next day.

Day 15. We thought about trying the summit today, but it was a little windy in the morning. Besides, we were gassed from the previous day. We resolved that tomorrow would be our day. All night long the wind blew pretty steady with occasional gusts. I didn't sleep much thinking that we had missed our chance by not attempting the summit during the previous day. The winds kept up till about 5 am. then started to settle down.

Day 16. This was Father's Day. We prepared for our summit attempt and left at 9 am, a typical time for groups to pull out of 17 camp. Earlier, it is just too windy and cold. On the traverse to Denali pass I placed several pickets for protection of our team. The winds plagued us for the next 2 hours up to the

pass, then for another hour on our way toward Arch Deacons Tower. Suddenly they stopped. By the time we were on the football field just below 20,000 ft., there was hardly a breeze. We dumped our packs at the football field and made the final push to the summit ridge carrying water and food stuffed inside our jackets. We left the rope with the packs. This was a mistake, since the summit ridge was a knife-edge snow cornice with substantial exposure. We carefully maneuvered through the quarter mile ridge and made the summit on a picture perfect day at about 5 pm. There was barely a gentle wind. We had been lucky enough to summit on probably the best day of the year. What a view and what a thrill. We were the highest people in North America for that moment. Denali had allowed us to reach its summit.

It took us about 2 and one half hours to make it back to 17 camp.

Day 17. We packed up and moved clear down to 11 camp picking up remaining caches at 16,200ft. and 14 camp. Each of us now had a monster load. Going downhill with a sled was awkward to say the least particularly for Joe, the back climber on the rope team.



## Red Slate Mountain

August 19-21, 2001

by Patty Kline

Our group of 9 met at the end of the McGee Creek Road at 8140' on Saturday 8-21-00 at 9:00 am Here are the directions to the trailhead from RJ Secor's book, The High Sierra: Peaks, Passes, and Trails. "This road provides access to the trailhead for the McGee Creek trail. (It should not be confused with the creek of the same name, which is located farther south near Bishop.) Leave Highway 395 about 6.4 miles north of Tom's Place, or about 8.4 miles south of the turnoff for Highway 203 and Mammoth Lakes. Go southwest from Highway 395, cross Crowley Lake Drive and follow the McGee Creek Road for 4 miles, past a campground, to the trailhead for the McGee Creek Trail". (Tom's Place is 23.5 miles north of Bishop-my note.)

This trip was done at a moderate to leisurely pace with ample time for enjoying the majestic scenery and picture taking. It was led in conjunction with the Wilderness Travel Course (WTC). Some of the participants used this trip as an experience trip required for graduation.

We got underway at 9:30 am after trailhead briefings, introductions, etc. The hike on Saturday was to Big McGee Lake at 10,0472', with a gain of

2,900' and 7 miles. The trail started up beautiful aspen filled McGee Canyon. At the largest stream crossing there is a division of the trail. The packers use the wide stream crossing, which at this time of year could be done by 2 footed creatures. We took the pile of logs crossing on the way up and the wide stream crossing on the way back. We arrived at 4:45 pm, after our leisurely hike, feeling refreshed.

Before our Saturday night community happy hour some people swam in the cold waters of the lake. Many tasty appetizers were shared at happy hour. A vote was taken, and Henry Egghart from Reno won first prize (Nalgene water bottle) for his sushi packed in on dry ice. Second prize (mini Nalgene bottle) went to Parvis Esna for his tequila and limes.

Sunday morning we left for Red Slate Mtn at 13,123+ at 8:50 am. It was a 2700' gain and 10 miles round trip, mostly on trail. We hiked about 4 miles up to McGee pass at 11,876± before turning off for the peak. Some of you have wondered why this is a "mountaineers peak" on the SPS list. It dominates the area, with no peaks north of Red Slate in the Sierra being higher than it. To the south  
(continued on page 19)



Participants on top of Red Slate 8-20-01.

From left to right (back row) Rich Gnagy, Ron Schrantz, David Honkins, Bill Siegel, Parvis Esna (front row) Henry Egghart, Sherry Ross. Photo by Patty Kline.

## Palisades Mountaineering Classic

July 28 - August 5, 2001

by Tina Bowman



Mt. Sill from Thunderbolt Aug 1, 2001  
Photo by Tina Bowman

Mountaineering is returning to national Sierra Club trips! Last summer Bill Oliver was the climbing leader for a trip to the Palisades; this year Doug Mantle was the climbing leader, and I was the assistant. The main trip leaders were Margi Waller and Anne Muzzini. The group went in from South Lake on Saturday, July 28, camping the first night at Bishop Lake. Some then climbed Mt. Goode. Coming in late because of a friend's wedding, on Sunday I met the other eleven of our group in Dusy Basin. Our camp for the next two nights was at the lower end of Dusy Basin, with a packer arriving Sunday afternoon with a multitude of bear barrels.

Some practiced climbing and rappelling near camp while others enjoyed the delightfully warm water of the Dusy Branch and nearby lake, conducive to cleanliness and happy spirits.

While some explored the lakes and Knapsack Pass, seven of us climbed Giraud on Monday, taking the fourth-class northeast ridge, a good climb. Jan St. Amand had pulled out her new Petzl "Reverso," a device that can be used for belaying, rappelling, short ascents, and even purifying water! (Maybe it could be trained to carry a heavy backpack, do you think?) Unfortunately, she also pulled out the instructions, which were too much in the midst of a climb. Doug had her use his ATC, and he used a dulfersitz when he needed to get below the crest of the ridge for a short bit. Jan never did get to use her new device, but her new yellow Bibler tent served as a beacon to guide us back to camp each day. We descended the class 2 route and endured the sand slog to get back to Dusy Basin. Stashing eleven of the sixteen bear barrels, we moved on Tuesday via Knapsack Pass to Palisade Basin, camping at the long thin Barrett Lake south of lake 11,468—more warm water! On Wednesday six of us climbed Thunderbolt. Doug successfully got the rope over the summit block; five of us used prussiks and an etrier to conquer the block. Dale Stuart, however, climbed the block on belay. Thursday saw many of the group climbing Columbine Peak with Doug; I stole away to meander up Sill from the south. Friday saw five of us headed to the U-Notch at 6 a.m. Doug, of course, led the fifth-class pitches up from the notch; I followed and started belaying others up while Doug was setting upper belays. The wind through the notch was

wreaking havoc when I threw the rope, sending it out towards the glacier where it kept snagging. Some down climbing and whipping of the rope eventually got the rope to the two climbers below. Up on the ridge, we traversed on the south side to the summit with a short belay to get on the very top. Since we arrived at 2 p.m., Doug kept our time on the summit brief. One double-rope rappel put us at the first belay spot, which all but Doug then descended from on a single-rope rappel back to the U-notch. Doug went down a little ways to the spot he had originally belayed me from and rappelled from  
(continued on page 20)

*(Palisades continued)*

there. We held our breath for a moment, but the rope cooperated and came down. Unfortunately, the cheese for lunch and most of my snacks that we had left at the notch had disappeared. We still had a bit to eat for a late lunch and headed down the chute and back to camp by 7 p.m.

Saturday we went over Isosceles Pass back to Dusy Basin. On the north side of the pass we belayed others down, first a few who then passed packs down past the third-class section and then the rest. We had used harnesses (and helmets) on the climbs, except for Goode and Columbine, but here I tied the participants in with a bowline on a coil, which no one aside from Doug knew how to tie properly. Descending to a camp at the lake south of lake 11,388 in Dusy Basin, we retrieved the bear barrels from the far end. Despite cold water, many of us had a dip in the lake and spent a relaxing afternoon. Sunday we were on our way back to Bishop Pass and home, most of us getting to the cars by 12:30.

Throughout the trip we enjoyed excellent and plentiful food planned and overseen by Anne. Because the paying participants shared commissary duties, I felt a bit guilty about not having a part in that, but perhaps they'd heard about my cooking. It was a great trip, and we're already planning a national club trip to the Minarets for next year. Hooray for the rebirth of mountaineering in the national Sierra Club!



North Pal. and upper Palisade Basin, August 2, 2001 Photo by Tina Bowman

*(Red Slate continued)*

it is 8 miles before a peak is higher than Red Slate. The northeast face is a classic class 4 snow and ice climb.

Our group took the easiest route. It was class 1-class 2. We first ascended a small rise NW of the pass on a use trail. Soon one comes to a somewhat flat area. Once across this, the route becomes steep again. Stay south of the east ridge of the peak and take your pick of the use trails. We spend a long time on the almost level summit taking pictures and having lunch. A friend of list finisher Doug Bear, Bob Forrest, was with us on top. Bob had come from New Jersey to spend a week doing day hikes, Red Slate being one of them. We left the top at 2:15 pm and were back in camp at 4:00 pm. Soon happy hour was under way with Sherry Ross taking first prize, and Rich Gnagy second prize.

Monday morning we broke camp at 9:00 am, returning to the cars at 1:00 pm. Most of us gorged ourselves at Whiskey Creek in Bishop for lunch before heading home.

Joe Wankum, as usual, did a stellar job as assistant on this trip. The 7 participants were Parvis Esna, Sherry Ross, Rich Gnagy, David Hankins, Henry Egghart, Bill Siegal and Ron Schrantz.

# 100 Years of Outings

## Nominate the Outings Leader of the Century!

This year, the Sierra Club observes the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the outings program. To celebrate, the Angeles Chapter would like to honor those who made these outings possible - the outings leaders of the first 100 years.

Please, send us your nomination for the Outings Leader of the Century. We will need to know the leader's full name, current address, when the leader was active, which entities he or she lead for, and why you think this leader should be recognized as the Leader of the Century. Include a picture if you can. (Note leaders nominated may be deceased.)

Nominations should be sent to:

Sierra Club Angeles Chapter, Attn: Leader of the Century, 3435 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 320, Los Angeles, CA 90010

or via email to [SSierran@ix.netcom.com](mailto:SSierran@ix.netcom.com) Deadline for nominations is November 5, 2001.

### A Brief History of the Sierra Peaks Section

By Bill Oliver, SPS Historian

Have you noticed - the Sierra Club was named for the Sierra Nevada! It was, indeed, one of the original purposes of the Club to protect and explore this "Range of Light," as John Muir referred to it. Beginning with the 1901 High Trip, with Muir in attendance, the Club conducted annual month-long excursions into various broad areas of the high Sierra. By the late '20s, the trips included a gnarly component of mountaineers eager to tackle hard peaks by tough routes. This contingent certainly included the legendary Norman Clyde, but also the likes of teenagers such as Jules Eichorn from the Bay Area and Glen Dawson from the Angeles Chapter.

A hundred years later, the Club is still actively involved in protecting, exploring and climbing in the Sierra - most notably through the efforts of our own Sierra Peaks Section. The Section was officially established following a unanimous vote of the Chapter ExComm in October 1955. Prior to this, during the '40s and early '50s there was comparatively scant Club mountaineering in the Sierra, although there continued to be National "knapsack" trips into it plus an occasional Rock Climbing Section outing to Yosemite, Whitney or the Sierra Palisades.

The Desert Peaks Section, founded in 1941, included the Sierra only incidentally, leading few outings into it. The folks who founded the SPS, who were also active in the DPS, recognized a strong desire to focus on the high Sierra, and set about to make it happen. Frank Sanborn, the first SPS Chair, worked for the Auto Club and had easy access to its map collection. The first draft of 100 peaks selected for the SPS peak list was drawn from among those named on the Auto Club maps of the Sierra. The list ranged from Matterhorn Peak in Yosemite to Owens Pk in Kern County. Before long, more detailed 15-min. topographic maps were utilized, and the first official list blossomed at 200 peaks.

Although some of the eighteen original "charter" members conducted Sierra climbs privately in 1954, the first official trip was a climb of Deer Mtn in the southern Sierra led by John Robinson and Frank Sanborn in May 1956. Emblem Status was conferred on those climbing the more notable "Emblem" peaks, a number that has been stable for quite awhile at fifteen. The first Emblem holder was Oliver Kehrlein, a renowned High Trip leader for whom the Sierra Club named its outings leadership award. Barbara Lilley in 1957 became the first person to earn Triple Emblem status with all three climbing sections: SPS, DPS and HPS. At the SPS annual banquet in 1989 honorary Emblem status was bestowed upon Eichorn and Dawson, the only prior recipient having been Norman Clyde in 1960.

An early controversy centered around the issue of tough peaks – whether to include on the List peaks whose easiest route was harder than easy 3<sup>rd</sup> class, which might require the use of a rope. The gnarlier contingent eventually carried the day, although the Section maintains a broad array of climbing opportunities suitable from beginner level through technical rock and snow ascents.

Never free of controversies, if only over the addition or deletion of peaks, the issue of peak registers was notable about 1990. Some members supported the Club's traditional role of maintaining registers on significant summits and preserving historic registers at its National office (but now at the Bancroft Library at UC Berkeley). Others preferred that the registers always remain on the summit. Certainly the broad consensus in any event was to keep the old registers in place as long as possible, and the SPS continues its long-standing practice of maintaining registers on virtually all of its 247 listed peaks.

It is alleged that at its founding, no one expected to actually climb all the peaks on the list. Well, Andy Smatko, who wasn't a founding member, evidently felt differently as in 1964 he became the first to achieve the high status of List Finisher. He subsequently also became the first Triple List Finisher. There are now 57 SPS List Finishers and 24 Triple List Finishers. This September Dr. Smatko will be honored by the Sierra Club with its prestigious Francis P. Farquhar Mountaineering Award, last presented in 1994.

Technical trips anywhere in the Club involving the use of ropes or ice axes require special screening and approval at the National level. The Angeles Chapter ranks first among the four Chapters currently conducting such trips, as the SPS alone sponsors over half of all the Club's restricted trips. A tradition set in place almost from the Club's founding, adventuring in the Sierra Nevada, remains very much alive today through the efforts of the Sierra Peaks Section.

[The author gratefully acknowledges extensive historical material compiled and published by Ron Jones in the SPS newsletter, *The Sierra Echo*, and the climbing records maintained by Dan Richter, SPS Archivist.]

**Per Ron Jones' research, the 18 original "charter members" of the SPS were:**

Bud Bingham	Owen Blackburn	Frank Bressel	Miles Brubacher
Don Clarke	Roger Gaefcke	Izzy Lieberman	Barbara Lilley
Ted Maier	Pat Meixner	Chuck Miller	Lee Owings
John Robinson	Frank Sanborn	Leo Scotti	Bob Sheller
George Wallerstein	John Wedberg		

Also joining in 1955 were:

Garver Light	Chuck Gerckens	Dick Kenyon
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*(Continued from page 16)*

Day 18. We made it all the way to base camp and were ready for a pick up by the airplane. It took several flights before we all made it back to Talkeetna due to the number of tourists flying on the planes that day. Pilots would sometimes only pick up one climber at a time. This was frustrating to say the least being within minutes of pizza and soda and yet unable to get in a plane. I waited for nearly 6 hours before I got picked up. Our gear didn't make it back till the following day.

We had a wonderful shower and a large hamburger with fries that evening. Our lips were so chapped and blistered we could hardly open wide

enough to get the hamburger in. The catsup and salty fries burned, but it was great. We were satisfied.

Day 19. Today we picked up a shuttle to Anchorage, boarded a standby flight to LA and arrived home happy and jubilant. Thanks to a great team. Each of us had done a spectacular job of managing the rope, climbing hardware, and gear necessary to make the summit. Each of us had also met our own individual physical challenges. None of us could have done it alone. Denali is a goal accomplished and a wonderful memory.

## IN HIGH PLACES

**HIGHPOINTING IN MICRONESIA, PART III****YAP**

By Burton (I looked her straight in the eyes) Falk

Our travel agent, who specializes in the Pacific Island destinations, explained to my wife, Jo, and me that Yap was the most traditional area of all Micronesia, and that, even though no national highpoint was located there, it would be a shame to for us to miss it during our tour of the region. She also mentioned that, should we decide to visit the island, due to airline schedules, we would have to commit to a full four-day stay.

Well, we weren't exactly sure what *traditional* might imply, but curiosity got the best of us. "Book us in," we told her.

And so it was that at 11:15 p.m., this past February 3<sup>rd</sup>, we landed on Yap, not really knowing what to expect.

The Yap airport is small, and on the night of our arrival I was at the back of the line pressing through passport control. Jo had managed to get ahead of me, but I could see her beyond immigration, a floral tiara being placed on her head by a young Yapese woman. Because of the milling crowd, however, I could see them only from their shoulders up.

Imagine my surprise after I finally squeezed through the gate to discover that the Yapese girl, wearing a traditional grass skirt, was not only lovely, but that she was topless. I looked her straight in the eyes as she placed a floral halo atop my head. I was bewitched. I was bothered. I was—you guessed it—bewildered.

Later that night, standing on the porch of our thatched hut, on the side of a lush hillside, looking out over a moonlit bay, it occurred to me that life couldn't be sweeter. The words to "Bali Ha'i" came to mind, "someday you'll see me, floating in the sunshine, my head sticking out from a low-flying cloud. You'll hear me call you..."

I thought I heard Yap calling. .

When discussing Yap, it's important to distinguish whether you are referring to the State of Yap, which consists of approximately 140 islands strung out over 600 linear miles, or Yap proper, a tight cluster of four islands—three of which are connected by bridges—containing 84% of the

State's 46 square mile total land area, and 65% of the State's 11,500 total population. For the purposes of this article, when we say Yap we mean Yap proper.

Yap is in the Caroline Islands, 515 miles southwest of Guam. It was formed by tectonic forces (actually it's a piece of Asia that broke off and floated away), rather than by volcanic action like most of the rest of Micronesia. The island's landscape varies from coastal villages flanked by graceful coconut palms, to open grassy areas with scattered pandanus (also known as screw pine, a tree with sword-like leaves), to thick jungles in the upland interior. Although there are a few good swimming beaches on Yap's south and west shores (in the lee of the trade winds), most of the coastline is fringed by dense mangrove forests.

Ethnically, the Yapese exhibit traits of western Pacific origin, specifically Filipino, Palauan and Indonesian. Culturally, more so than any other Micronesian group, the Yapese have been reluctant to adapt modern ways. Although they have endured four successive colonial administrations—Spanish, German, Japanese and American, their culture remains relatively free of most outside influences, and they continue to vigorously retain their own customs and traditions.

One Yapese tradition that appears regressive to most outsiders is their ancient caste system, which, although weakened, remains in effect even today. While not readily apparent in terms of standard of living, every islander's social status is determined by the village of his or her birth (and the status of each village is based on the outcome of inter-village wars fought long ago). Local government is another cause for raised eyebrows, as, although there is a democratically elected State Legislature, each village remains ruled by a chief who holds his position because the land he owns possesses the highest status of all land in the village. In other words, in Yap land has status, and status is power.

A third negative involves sexual parity. Most women—especially those from the outer islands—

remain subservient to men. In traditional families, sisters can neither begin eating until their brothers are finished, nor can they contradict statements made by their male siblings.

The following morning, Sunday, Feb. 4<sup>th</sup>, Jo and I slept in and then enjoyed a late breakfast, consisting mostly of fresh island fruit, at the eight-unit Pathways Hotel, where we appeared to be the only guests. In the early afternoon, after unpacking and bringing our journals up to date, we decided to walk into the nearby town (the only town, in fact) of Colonia, population 1,188, the capital of the State of Yap, for lunch.

The day was hot and humid, and we began to melt down as soon as we started walking east along Chamorro Bay, heading for the bridge into town.

It was quiet, too. The only signs of life we encountered along the way were a couple of passing taxicabs, both empty; three or four teenagers catching a slight breeze on the bridge; and a few mangy dogs.

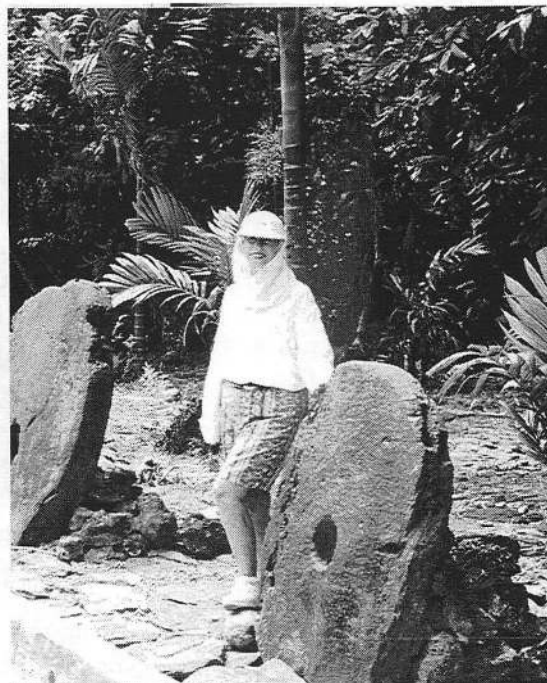
Arriving at the central crossroads of Colonia and finding it deserted, we continued east on the short main drag, past the Yap Cooperative Association, the Yap Small Business Center, the Yap Marina, the Federated Government Offices and, finally, the State Legislature Building, encountering nary a soul along our way. Colonia wasn't merely sleepy, it was in a coma. Turning back, we saw a "Nature's Way" dive boat pulling into the marina, so we ambled over to have a look—we were desperate for activity. The wet-suited leader of the dive group was a petite woman of Japanese descent, who, after bidding her clients (also Japanese) goodbye, explained to us that Colonia was always quiet, but that it was especially dead on Sundays. When we inquired about a good place for lunch, she recommended the restaurant at the Manta Ray Bay Hotel, a quarter mile north of town. And that may have been the best advice we got during our entire Micronesian adventure.

The Manta Ray Bistro, located on the third and top floor of the hotel, although unpretentious, was an unexpected delight. The restaurant overlooks Tamil Bay, and it is air conditioned by means of windows left open to catch the trades. There are no menus; you scan the blackboard at the entrance listing the day's featured dishes, and place your order before you sit down. Jo and I both opted for Ono (Wahoo) sandwiches, which were absolutely, positively, mouth-wateringly delicious. We were sure that the fish had been caught within

the hour.

Our lunch was so good, in fact, that we returned that same evening for dinner—Ono served in a champagne-butter sauce—and then did a repeat two nights later as well. We've dined at some highly rated (read expensive) seafood restaurants over the years, but we both agree that our \$13 dinners in Yap were the best anywhere.

Yap, along with Kosrae, Pohnpei and Chuuk (formerly Truck), make up the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), a country that was admitted to the United Nations in 1991. At one time, the FSM might have included the Marshall Islands and Palau, but in 1977, at the time of a vote on a common constitution, those two island groups broke away and eventually became independent Republics on their own. Like the Marshall Islands and Palau, the FSM entered into a long-term Compact of Free Association with the USA, under the terms of which



Jo Falk Admiring Yap Currency

we have supplied big bucks (\$1.3 billion to FSM alone) in exchange for the rights to build military bases on the islands if so needed (but with the Cold War over, it's highly unlikely we'll ever exercise that option).

This coming November, the 15-year financial aid portion of the Compact Agreement comes to an end, and the U.S. and the FSM are now engaged in negotiations regarding ongoing support. Considering that the FSM's trade deficits are huge (in one recent year, their imports were \$84 million;

their exports \$10 million), it seems that economic disaster is certain unless aid is continued and/or alternate sources of income can be found. The single best opportunity for increased revenue seems to lie in increased tourism, however many Micronesians, especially the Yapese, are reluctant to have their home islands overrun by hoards of vacationing Asians, as is the case with Guam and Saipan. Increases in fishing and fish processing could also add significantly to the GNP, but those ventures would require large infusions of capital and expertise. Copra (the source of coconut oil) production, once a major source of income in Micronesia, seems to be a dead issue at present.

The following day, Monday, Jo and I hired Eugene, the part-time driver for the Pathways Hotel, to drive us to the top of Mt. Matade, the 571' highpoint of the State of Yap. This was an interesting excursion, as: 1. Eugene was halfway up 482' Medeqdeq Hill, a popular visitors' destination overlooking Colonia, before we realized he was taking us up the wrong summit. His excuse was that he thought we must be mistaken—no one had ever asked him to drive up Matade before. 2. After

reorganizing, we found that the hotel's Toyota van couldn't get through a large mud puddle on the dirt road leading to the highpoint, so we had to get out and hike, and, 3. Eugene, in his mid twenties, was so overweight and out of shape (too much Spam and Ruffles) that Jo and I became seriously concerned for his health, as he huffed and puffed his way to the top of the hill.

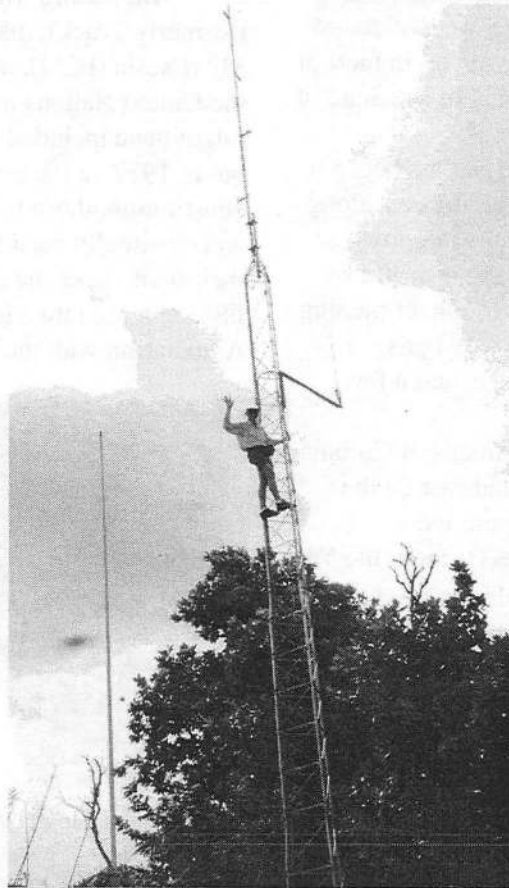
From the top of Mt. Matade, on which several antennae are located, we enjoyed a good view of Yap proper, including sprawling Tamil Bay, in the middle of which we could see Tarang Island, the one time home of David O'Keefe.

The flamboyant O'Keefe, arguably Yap's most famous citizen, was an Irish-American sailor, who,

after nearly dying during a shipwreck on the island in 1871, spent the next 30 years amassing a fortune in the copra trade. He, Tarang Island, and what little remains of his residence there—built of bricks imported from Hong Kong—were made famous in the movie, "His Majesty O'Keefe," starring Burt Lancaster.

Following our ascent of Mt. Matade, Eugene drove us south to an overgrown WWII Japanese airfield, where we viewed the remains of two Zeros and an anti-aircraft gun, all of which were destroyed in a U.S. air raid during that war. Although the U.S. bypassed Yap in the final drive toward Japan, we did effectively cut off supplies to the Japanese troops stationed there. As a consequence, the Japanese expropriated what few foodstuffs the Yapese possessed, thus making life especially difficult for the islanders during the last months of the war.

When I was a kid, my favorite reading material—besides the Hardy Boys series and Richard Halliburton's "Complete Book of Marvels," consisted of two dog-eared "Ripley's Believe it or Not" paperbacks, in which, along with many other wondrous facts, I learned that the Yapese employed large stone discs, or



"Author on top of the summit of Yap"

*rai*, as currency.

Well, guess what? They still do. Improbable as it may seem, the Yapese, although using dollars for most day-to-day transactions, still utilize the stone discs (which have holes carved in their centers for ease of handling), as currency for traditional purchases.

Quarried in Palau, and rafted 250 miles back to Yap, the value of the limestone discs, which vary in size from 1' to 13' in diameter, depends on their age and history.

In 1929, the Japanese civil government counted 13,281 of these "coins," however during WWII many were destroyed when the occupiers smashed them (and used them as road fill) in punishment



when the Yapese didn't cooperate in forced labor projects. Others, unfortunately, were removed as souvenirs. Today only about half of those original 13,000 discs survive.

Interestingly, the *rai* that do remain are not tucked under mattresses or buried in the back yard, but displayed rather prominently. Jo and I came across several stone coin "banks," lining the roads and pathways as we roamed the island. Rarely moved, and now illegal to take off Yap, every islander knows precisely what stones his or her family owns.

During our four days on Yap, we did almost everything a tourist could do except go scuba diving (however that's what a majority of the visitors come to Yap to do, especially to view the island's renowned squadron of manta rays). We visited several villages, including Balabat, where we paid \$2.50 each for the privilege of walking deep into the jungle on a well-maintained ancient stone footpath, a part of a network of trails that once connected all the island villages; Bechiyal, where we viewed a thatched men's house containing an anatomically-correct mannequin of a woman, designed to teach the young men of the village the intricacies of the opposite sex; and Kadaay, where late one afternoon we witnessed a stick dance, the cultural highlight of our visit..

Stick dances, which are choreographed to commemorate a large range of occasions—from winning important battles to high school graduations, may be the finest of all the Yapese traditions. The one we witnessed took place on a wide stone walk shaded by towering coconut palms just before dusk. About 20 village young people lined up in two rows—the girls and young women decked out in grass skirts, and topless; the boys and young men wearing loincloth, and all holding 3' long sticks. Following a loud shout from the leader, they began to chant in unison, beat their sticks against the ground and against one another's, and weave in and out along the lines. The timing was perfect, and the clacking rhythm hypnotic. Not only were the dancers well trained, but also from their smiles it was obvious that they were having a good time. The whole performance lasted about 30 minutes.

In Kadaay, too, we learned first hand about betel nuts—you know, those things that Bloody Mary was always chewing in *South Pacific*.

Well, in Yap they chew them still—from kids as young as 10 or 12, to folks on their deathbeds. In

fact, it's hard to find an adult Yapese who doesn't have a bulging cheek, red lips and black teeth. And since most everyone goes around spitting like a major league ballplayer, the streets and sidewalks are stained the color of betel juice. Call me yellow, but when I see an attractive brown woman let loose with a spurt of red, I turn green.

But don't let me talk you out of it. Give it a try. What you do is take a green betel nut (a fruit about the size of a kiwi that grows in clusters on the betel palm tree), split it in half, sprinkle it with roasted, granulated coral (most everyone carries their own coral shaker), wrap it with a pepper leaf (a large leaf not at all similar to the leaf of our California pepper tree), pop the whole package in your mouth and begin chewing. After a few moments, you too will begin to feel a mild high that lasts for about ten minutes.

Did I try it? Yeah. Did I feel a buzz? You bet. Would I try it again? No thanks. Make mine a gin and tonic.

On Wednesday evening, after four full days on Yap, Eugene drove us back to the airport so we could catch the twice-weekly flight bound for Guam. While checking our baggage, we noticed a small car pull up in parking lot across the street. Out popped the same young woman who had greeted us with the flora tiaras, three nights earlier. Once again she was grass skirted and topless; once again she was ready to bedazzle the batch of passengers arriving on the plane on which Jo and I would soon depart

Our stay had been interesting, but it was time to leave. Yap, as I discovered, was not my Bali Ha'i. The island was still calling, but I wasn't picking up.

Next we would visit Saipan and Guam, the two most westernized islands in Micronesia, where we could immerse ourselves once again in good old American traditions. You know, traditions like ordering sushi, quaffing a Sapporo, and renting a

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**JANUARY 9, 2002**

**SPS AWARDS BANQUET**  
**LONG BEACH**

(Continued from page 11)

difficulty of the latter was not obvious. By dinner time the sky was grey, low clouds were drifting in and the prospect for the peak climb became uncertain.

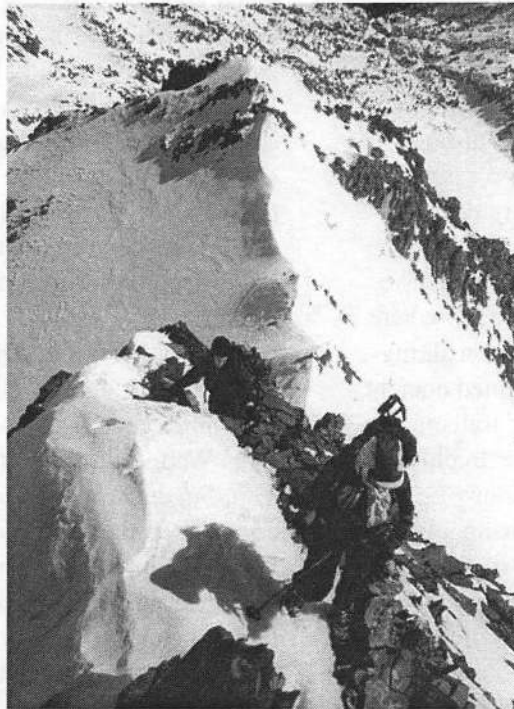
On Mon we got up at 4:30 am. To our delight the sky was full of stars. After flushing down two packs of oatmeal with hot tea, we put on crampons,

packed up the skis and headed out by first daylight. Jonathan wanted to conserve his energy for the ski run down and opted out of the peak climb. We skied up to Pk 12,360' where the details of the route became clear. There are three high points to this mountain, the middle one being the highest. An impressive, steep snowfield lies just north of R&W. We left our skis at Pk 12,360' and cramponed just below the c1 2 ridge to a saddle just east of R&W. From there we climbed the c1 3 NE ridge leading straight to the summit. It was a

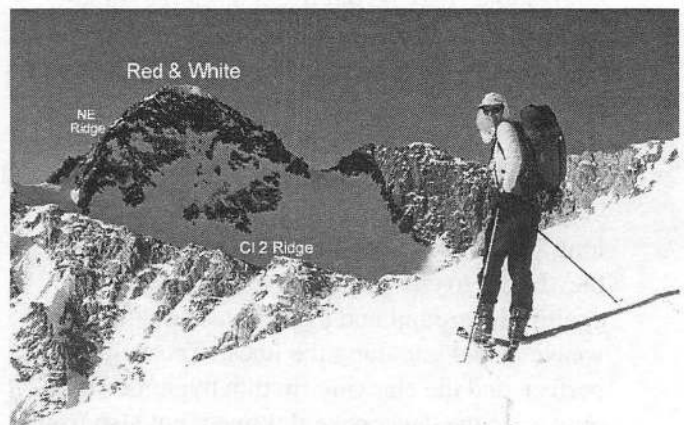
mixed rock and snow climb. The rock was highly unstable and although we stayed close together, one of us had a close encounter with a tumbling block of major proportions. Jonathan claimed he even heard the rumble from basecamp. At 9:30 am we were happy to be on the summit, although a bit uneasy about the descent. We signed the peak register as first of the year. Wonder why only two pages were filled in 2000. The view over the snow covered Sierra peaks was spectacular. It was windstill and sunny. Lots of pictures were taken, but then we had to face the music and head down. Climbing in telemark boots is not exactly ideal, even with crampons on like Mark did. Diligently we made it down the ridge without incident. Susan performed a successful self arrest on a steep snowfield. The real fun started when we switched from crampons to skis. We had a wonderful ski run down from Pk 12,360'. We heard voices and spotted two people coming down over corniced Hopkins Pass. By 12:30 pm we were back at basecamp. Time for

lunch and relaxing. The skiers passed by and we greeted them. Later, their ski tracks on a sunny slope were run over by a sizable wet snow avalanche. We double checked our beacons for the ski run down. Spring snow made the descent very pleasant, nevertheless turning with full packs is an exhausting fun through trees, across creeks, etc.

After 2 1/2 hrs we were back at the car. Packed up and were ready to plough our AWD Subaru's through the snow as before. Then Murphy's law struck: The tires sank through the mush and the car bodies rested on a 1 foot snow layer. The next hour+ was spent shoveling snow on the road. By 6 pm we were on dry ground, by 11 pm I finally dropped into my bed. Thanks to everyone's camaraderie, endurance, and patience. Probably, after the bodies recover, memories of another fine ski mountaineering adventure remain.



Mark and Susan climbing c13 NE ridge



Mark ascending toward Red and White.  
Route: Along c12 ridge to saddle,  
then up c13 NE ridge to summit.

## CONSERVATION 2 LINERS

Barbee Tidball

The last time I wrote an official Conservation 2 Liners article was July/August of 1999 - instead there have been a number of issue-specific articles about which I sincerely hope a couple of you have written letters to your representatives. I was looking through old issues of *The Sierra Echo*, to get an overview of the types of conservation issues that I have been reporting to you on - and I was curious to see the status of a few past issues. What amazed me was how many issues are still current. Look at the list of updates I've prepared - its obvious that environmental concerns never go away - we can't just climb if we want to protect the Sierra and the world!

- ❑ **Energy Conservation** In 1999 we were in a drought and worrying about water savings - today its electrical energy. Both issues affect the Sierra's water supply!
- ❑ **Recreation Fees – FEE Demo.** The House passed on June 22, 2001 an amendment to extend the program for another four years, through Sept. 2006! It is now up to the Senate (which from my research had not voted as of 9/7/01) Call Senator Feinstein (202/224-3841) as the decision for or against Fee demo now rests with the Senate Subcommittee on Interior Appropriations – State your opposition to the Recreational Fee Demonstration Program in the 2002 Appropriations bill. Fee Demo has been in “demonstration” since 1996 - it is time to stop the program without completing the required cost-benefit analysis and providing the public an opportunity to comment. (Fee demo articles and alerts have appeared in *The Sierra Echo* in 2000 and most recently in the March/April 2001 issue.)
- ❑ **California Wildlands Project – Working Lands Stewardship Act of 2001 (H.R. 2375)** For the past five years environmentalists have been working to identify important habitats in California. The habitats identified are both on public and private lands. The lands identified provide habitat for over 2/3 of CA's rare and endangered species. The Federal Farm Bill currently provides dollars to landowners for conservation and H.R. 2375 has been written to increase funding provided to restore wildlife habitat and to preserve open space. The H.R. 2375 can help farmers and the environment. Please write your U.S. Congressperson today and ask him or her to support attaching H.R. 2375 to the Farm Bill – write by Sept. 20, 2001. For more information contact [ben@calwild.org](mailto:ben@calwild.org) or log onto [www.calwild.org](http://www.calwild.org).
- ❑ **USFS Lawsuit** In the May/June 2000 issue of *The Sierra Echo*, we ran a series of articles on a lawsuit contesting Forest Service practices regarding environmental impact statements and special-use-permits for commercial operators in the Sierra. On June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2001 a federal judge ruled that the Forest Service had been illegally issuing special-use-permits to commercial operators. The ruling was a victory for High Sierra Hikers, Wilderness Watch (including Gary Guenther who has devoted months to researching Sierra management issues) and Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics. The ruling “ cited the Forest Service's failure to protect the wilderness from environmental damage in popular meadows and lake basins due to excessive commercial uses of those areas.” (Quote from Wilderness Watch) In addition the judge did not find the Forest Service at fault on other management issues. “But on most points the causes for action were dismissed. One of the issues was the failure of the Forest Service to adopt a new Management Plan for the wilderness areas. In its ruling the court order states that the plaintiff's frustration with the slow pace of the Forest Service in adopting a plan is justifiable, but moot because of the April 2001 adoption of a new wilderness management plan. Similarly a number of other allegations are ruled moot because of the existence of the Management Plan.” (e-mail info sent to Barbee)
- ❑ **Management Plan – Ansel Adams, John Muir, Dinkey Lakes Wildernesses:** The U.S. Forest Service after months of work on both the original DEIS and the RDEIS (see *Echo* articles May/June 199 and Sept/Oct 2000) issued their Final Environmental Impact Statement

(EIS) in April. The document comprises the Land and Resource Management Plan for these important wildernesses. The document was accepted for the most part by environmental groups and will impact us on issues regarding permits, trail management, camping, fire management and many other wilderness issues for years to come. The new regulations will be phased in over the next 5 years.

- **Fixed Anchors in Wilderness** The Bush administration has put on hold any rule making on this issue for U.S. Forest service lands. We are continuing to watch for new developments. (See Echo articles Sept/Oct 1997, Nov/Dec 1997, March/April 1999 and Sept/Oct 2000)
- **Joshua Tree – Fixed Anchors** In November 1997 the Management Plan for Backcountry and Wilderness management was released. After many meetings and public comments a management plan provided for limited placement of fixed anchors in wilderness areas in the park. A permit process is being developed to help park managers. Comments on the permit process were due this month. Watch for further information on climbing on Joshua Tree.
- **Manter Meadow** July/August 2000 *The Echo* reported on the Manter Meadow fire. An Environmental Assessment has now been completed for the Manter Restoration Project and the public comment period ended August of 2001. The Forest Services proposed action includes “fuel treatments, wildlife habitat restoration, reforestation and improvement of visitor safety within areas affected by the fire outside wilderness.” The restoration plans include tree removal especially dead trees near roads, trails and camping areas. Some of the removal will be by a commercial timber sale. For a copy of the final decision contact Cannell Meadow Ranger District, Kathy Roche, 105 Whitney, P.O. Box 9, Kernville, CA 93238.
- **California Legislation Proposed to eliminate Fully Protected Species Status** The State Legislature is considering two bills, AB 985 and AB 1561, that will eliminate Fully Protected Species Status. Environmentalists need to oppose weakening the Fully Protected Species law without first strengthening the California Endangered Species Act and the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act. Write your CA Senate representative. The bills are currently referred to committee for study.
- **Mammoth Airport** – The last two issues of *The Echo* carried articles on the proposed expansion of the airport near Mammoth. The *LA Times* carried an editorial in the Saturday, August 25, 2001 paper. The editorial concluded as follows “The Eastern Sierra is a public treasure—a rare refuge from noise, sprawl and pollution. There’s no doubt that expanding the Mammoth airport would help the Mammoth resort become an upscale ski destination. But Californians deserve a full accounting of how such an expansion would affect the surrounding landscape, which is cherished by people of all incomes and recreational tastes. Also see *LA Times* article on August 21, 2001 for more information.
- **Sierra Bighorn** On a recent trip to Abbot and Mills a climber commented that the Sierra bighorn was in decline. I remembered seeing 2 bighorn on my first trip to Dade I decided to check on bighorn and I found that since receiving endangered species status in 2000 the Sierra bighorn has increased in population. From a low in 1998 of 100 in 2001 there are an estimated 170. For more information and to support work on protection and research the Sierra Nevada Bighorn Sheep Foundation can be reached at [www.sierrabighorn.org](http://www.sierrabighorn.org). or by writing P.O. Box 1183, Bishop, CA 93515. The web site has some good sheep information.
- **Sierra Blue Oaks** Blue Oaks (*quercus douglassi*) are an integral part of the Sierra foothills. However according to a recent report in the *Sierra News*, newsletter of the Sierra Nevada Alliance, the oaks are in trouble from the increase in development, “in 10 years Placer Co. population increased 43.7%, Madera by 39.7%, Calaveras by 26% and El Dorado by 24%. California legislation AB 242 has passed the House and 2 Senate Committees the bill “creates the Oak Woodlands Conservation Act and establishes the Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund to provide for grants for conservation easements, incentive programs, public education and outreach related to conservation of oak woodlands. The bill transfers a minimum of \$5 million and a maximum of \$8 million from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Fund. “ (*notes from CA legislative summary*)

Forest Service, United States Department of Agriculture

Inyo National Forest, 873 N. Main Street, Bishop, CA 93514

## **NEW FOOD STORAGE REQUIREMENTS IN THE EASTERN SIERRA**

### **'BE BEAR AWARE'**

Black bear and human interactions in the Eastern Sierra have significantly increased over the last two years, and access to human food is one reason bear encounters are on the rise. Bears have ripped through backpacks, torn up tents, caused thousands of dollars in damage to vehicles, and ruined the trips of many Eastern Sierra travelers. People planning trips in the Eastern Sierra this summer need to take the time and the responsibility to become informed about proper food storage in the area they plan to visit.

Proper storage of food, toiletries, and other scented items protects personal property, helps ensure a safe visit, and maintains a wild black bear population. Backpackers should carry bear resistant canisters, stock users should use bear resistant panniers, and visitors to campgrounds and picnic areas need to use food storage lockers where they are provided. Where bear-resistant container requirements have been implemented and bear boxes utilized, bears can no longer gain access to human food, and the bear activity has dramatically decreased and even halted altogether.

### **WILDERNESS**

Bear activity levels in Wilderness have increased not only on the Inyo National Forest but throughout the Sierra Nevada. Neighboring Yosemite and Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Parks have bear-resistant food storage requirements. Forest Orders have been in place on the Inyo National Forest since 1997, requiring visitors to properly store their food in wilderness areas. In the summer of 2000, bear-resistant canisters were required on the main Mt. Whitney Trail. Due to continued high bear activity levels, bear-resistant canisters and panniers are now required for food storage in the certain areas from May 25<sup>th</sup> through October 31<sup>st</sup>. Canisters can fit inside or outside of backpacks and hold up to nine days worth of food for one person. They can be rented or purchased at many sporting goods stores, ranger stations and visitor centers. On other trails throughout the Inyo National Forest the use of canisters is highly recommended for human safety and to protect wild bears. The counter-balance method of food storage, where food is hung from sacks over a tree branch, works in few areas, however please check with your local ranger station before depending on this method.

### **FRONT COUNTRY, TRAILHEADS, AND OTHER DEVELOPED SITES**

Since 1992, Forest Orders have required visitors to properly protect food from wild animals. The most effective way to keep food from bears is to use food storage lockers where they are provided at campgrounds and trailheads. Storing food out of site within a vehicle can work in some low bear activity areas, however there is no guarantee that bears will not break in to access food or other scented items. Campgrounds, trailheads, and day use areas throughout the eastern Sierra are being outfitted with food storage lockers, especially where bear activity has been high. Some campgrounds have food storage lockers at each campsite and others have lockers that are shared between multiple campsites. Contacting a ranger station to determine the food storage capacity at the destination campground will help visitors plan for the amount of food to bring.

Whether using a canister, food storage locker, or counter-balance method, any item with an odor should be stored in a manner that prevents access by wild animals. These items include food, toiletries, and trash. Never take food or toiletries into a tent and do not sleep in clothing worn while cooking. When leaving a vehicle unattended, be sure to hide any items shaped like common food items - such as coolers, water bottles, cans, paper towel rolls, candy wrappers, etc.

More information, including updates on bear activity, successful methods of food storage for particular areas, and locations of food storage requirements and food storage lockers, can be obtained by calling the Inyo National Forest ranger station for the area in which you plan to travel. *(Continued next page)*

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION Bear-resistant canisters and panniers are now required for food storage in the following areas from May 25<sup>th</sup> through October 31<sup>st</sup>:

Rush Creek Drainage

Trails leading out of the Mammoth Lakes area from Agnew Meadows and Reds Meadow

Little Lakes Valley

Bishop Pass

Kearsarge Pass

Mt. Whitney main trail

Food storage lockers are available at the following locations:

**CAMPGROUNDS:**

Lee Vining Area: Ellery Lake, Sawmill Walk-in, Junction Camp, Big Bend campgrounds

Walker Lake Trailhead Campground

June Lake Loop: June Lake, Gull Lake, Reverse Creek, and Silver Lake campgrounds

Obsidian Flat group camp

Mammoth Area: Twin Lakes Campground and Reds Meadow Campground

Rock Creek Canyon: Rock Creek Lake, Upper Pine Grove, and Pine Grove campgrounds.

East Fork Campground will have lockers later this summer.

Bishop Creek Area: Intake Walk-in, Mountain Glen, Table Mountain, Willow campgrounds.

Onion Valley and Upper & Lower Grays Meadow campgrounds

Whitney Portal Campgrounds and Day Use Area and Lone Pine Campground

Horseshoe Meadow and Cottonwood Lakes Hiker campgrounds

**TRAILHEADS:**

Rush Creek Trailhead and Fern Lake Trailhead

South Lake Trailhead (Bishop Creek)

Little Lakes Valley and Hilton Lakes Trailhead (Rock Creek)

Mt. Whitney Trailhead

Additional food storage lockers are being constructed and placed at campgrounds and trailheads throughout the eastern Sierra. Please check with the Inyo National Forest ranger station near your destination for the latest food storage locker update.

## **SIERRA CLUB MOUNTAINEERING VIDEO**

Before Nate Clark became the President of the Sierra Club, he filmed movies on the Sierra Club's High Trips. In celebration of the centennial year of Sierra Club outings, Nate's movie footage is now available in standard VHS format videotape.

The amazing content of this videotape includes footage from the Sierra Club's 1934 High Trip in Yosemite as well as three other interesting mountaineering adventures of that era. Sierra Club luminaries featured include Lewis Clark (Nate's brother), Glen and Muir Dawson, Jules Eichorn, Francis Farquhar, Marjorie Bridge (Farquhar), Louise Hildebrand, Jack Riegelhuth, Bestor Robinson and Mary Saylor. Norman Clyde makes a brief appearance. Footage includes rock climbing practice, ascents of Cathedral Peak (all three spires), a descent of Muir Gorge on the Tuolumne River, the first mid-winter ascent of Mt. Lyell in 1934, with Bestor Robinson, Lewis Clark, Einar Nilsson and David Brower, and a July 4, 1941 ascent of Mt. Clark, with Dick and Larry Burnley, Lewis Clark and Jonnie Serna.

To order, send a check for \$15 to Angeles Chapter - Sierra Club, Attn: Video Orders, 3435 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 320, Los Angeles, CA 90010. Purchase price includes postage, handling and all applicable taxes.

# SPS Annual Banquet

January 9, 2002

## Kilimanjaro

 – a video presentation

### Dave Sholle – Speaker/Video Director

See upcoming October/November Echo for story & details

### Ticket Order Form

Mail checks made out to the SPS and this form to Barbee Tidball, 3826 N. Weston Place, Long Beach, CA 90807-3317 along with a SASE for your tickets

Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Tickets \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$25.00

### Dinner Selections:

Vegetarian \_\_\_\_\_ Chicken \_\_\_\_\_ Fish or Meat \_\_\_\_\_

All meals include green salad, rolls, desert and coffee, tea or sodas.

### Location:

Long Beach, CA - See SPS Management Comm. Decision 9/12/01.

### Time:

6:00 pm No Host Bar, 7:30 dinner. Evening's awards program will start at 8:30 pm and the Speaker at 9 pm.

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**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** \$12.00 per year, due by March 31st. Subscribing to the ECHO is a requirement for active membership in the SPS. Sustaining membership is \$25.00 per year, and includes first class postage. Submit new subscription applications and renewals to the section Treasurer: Maria Roa, 2249 Pattiglen Ave., La Verne, CA 91750 and include your Sierra Club membership number. New applications received after October 1 are credited for the subsequent year. Only one ECHO subscription is necessary for multiple members of a family residing at one address. Contributions or gifts to the Sierra Club or the SPS are not tax-deductible.

**ADVERTISEMENT:** Private activity announcements and advertisements are accepted at the following rates. Private trip announcements: \$1.00 for the first 4 lines and \$1.00 for each additional line. Other announcements and product/service advertisements: \$1.00 per line or \$25.00 for a half page space. Reach out to our climbing constituency and place an ad today! Send copy and check made out to the SPS, to the Editor.

**ADDRESS CHANGES:** Send address changes to Matthew Richardson, 333 Sycamore Ave., Claremont, CA 91711. The ECHO is mailed via 3rd class mail and will not be forwarded by the post office.

**PEAKS LIST:** Copies of the SPS peaks list can be obtained by sending \$1.00 and a SASE to the section Secretary: Matthew Richardson, 333 Sycamore Ave., Claremont, CA 91711.

**MISSING ISSUES:** Inquiries regarding missing issues should be directed to the section Mailer: Erik Siering, 9359 Lincoln Blvd. #1252, Los Angeles, CA 90045-7101.

**AWARDS:** Notification of accomplishments send to section Secretary: Matthew Richardson, 333 Sycamore Ave., Claremont, CA 91711. To purchase awards merchandise - Emblem pins (\$15.00), senior emblem pins (\$15.00), master emblem pins (\$15.00), list finisher pins (\$15.00), and section patches (\$2.00) are available from Patty Kline, 20362 Callon Dr, Topanga Cyn, CA, 90290. Make all Checks Payable to the SPS, all prices include sales tax.

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"To explore, enjoy, and preserve"



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